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THIS IS NOT THY HOME.—CHAUCER.

'TIS HEAVEN ITSELF THAT POINTS TO THE HEREAFTER

SOCRATES taught that this life could not end all.



PLATO meditating on Immortality before SOCRATES, the BUTTERFLY, SKULL, and POPPY about 400 B.C.

ADDISON.

FROM DAWN TILL SUNSET.

Use is Life, and he most truly lives
who uses best.

THE BLACKSMITH'S ARM AND
THE STATESMAN'S BRAIN.

The most truly Living Body is the most active in decay; the more bodily and mental vigour are displayed, the more quickly do the various tissues melt down into substances which are without delay removed by the excreting organs. *The more the Blacksmith Works his Arms and the Statesman his Brain*, the heavier bulk of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen is thrown out by the lungs, liver, skin, and kidneys. Do they then wear them out by this constant friction and drain? No, no—the more the bricks are removed from the old wall, the more new bricks will a good builder put in; and so, provided that the supply is sufficient—that the builder is a good one—the more rapid the drain, the newer and stronger and better the body will become.

The Renewal of Life.

The Want of Nutriment is the Cause of Disease.

MILK THE ONLY PERFECT HUMAN BUILDER.

As Milk is the only perfect food, the above facts prove the importance of Milk when *sipped hot*, when you have drawn an overdraft on the bank of life. **HOT MILK** is the only True Food for the prevention of disease, *Influenza, Sleeplessness, &c., &c.* (premature death); in any form of Physical or Mental Strain use Hot Milk and ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT,' as occasion may require, to cause a Natural flow of Healthy Bile (a New Life). By the use of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' the Hot Milk will agree, which otherwise might produce biliousness, &c.

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' is the best and simplest preparation for regulating the action of the liver that has yet been discovered. It prevents diarrhoea.—It removes effete gouty, rheumatic matter, or any form of poison from the blood. No one should go for a change of air without a supply of this invaluable preparation.

FROM THE LATE REV. J. W. NEIL.—'Holy Trinity Church, North Shields, Nov. 1, 1873.—

Dear Sir,—As an illustration of the beneficial effects of your "Fruit Salt," I can have no hesitation in giving you the particulars of the case of one of my friends. His whole life was clouded by the want of vigorous health, and to such an extent did the sluggish action of the liver and its concomitant bilious headache affect him that he was obliged to live upon only a few articles of diet, and to be most sparing in their use. This uncomfortable and involuntary asceticism, whilst it probably alleviated his sufferings, did nothing in effecting a cure, although persevered in for some twenty-five years, and also, to my knowledge, consulting very eminent members of the faculty, frequently even going to town for that purpose. By the use of your simple "FRUIT SALT," however, he now enjoys the vigorous health he so long coveted; he has never had a headache or constipation since he commenced to use it, about six months ago, and can partake of his food in such a hearty manner as to afford, as you may imagine, great satisfaction to himself and friends. There are others known to me to whom your remedy has been so beneficial in various kinds of complaints, that I think you may very well extend its use, both for your own interest and *pro bono publico*. I find myself that it makes a very refreshing and exhilarating drink.—I remain, Dear Sir, yours faithfully, J. W. NEIL.—To J. C. ENO, Esq.'

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' contains the valuable saline constituents of ripe fruit, and is also utterly essential to the healthy action of the animal economy. To travellers, emigrants, sailors, or residents in tropical climates it is invaluable. By its use the blood is kept pure, and fevers and epidemics prevented.

IT OUGHT TO BE KEPT IN EVERY BEDROOM IN READINESS FOR ANY EMERGENCY.
ONLY TRUTH CAN GIVE TRUE REPUTATION. ONLY REALITY CAN BE
OF REAL PROFIT.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.—Sterling Honesty of Purpose. Without it Life is a Sham.

CAUTION.—Examine each Bottle, and see the Capsule is marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Without it you have been imposed on by a worthless imitation. Sold by all Chemists.

Prepared only at ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' WORKS, LONDON, S.E., by J. C. ENO'S Patent.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

APRIL 1894.

The Matchmaker.

Human life is nought but error.—SCHILLER.

BY L. B. WALFORD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

‘LET EVERY HERRING HANG BY ITS AIN TAIL!’

‘ONLY Torquil!’ was Penelope’s first thought, and her steps instantly slackened in obedience to it.

But the next minute she did not feel inclined to say ‘only Torquil.’ Torquil had rushed past her, oblivious of her presence, and apparently absorbed in his own emotions. She had caught a full glimpse of his bronzed face distorted with passion, and heard him again give utterance to a deep adjuration, whose object or objects it was not difficult to determine. His eye was directed towards the heather brae. On the brae there were only two people.

Penelope shrank into herself.

For a few minutes she felt literally too much startled to think. She almost doubted the evidence of her own eyes and ears; it seemed such a strange, inexplicable thing, that this simple mountaineer should be thus moved by a sight which, however depressing to herself, could not be supposed to have any interest for him.

Presently, however, she began as usual to take counsel with herself in her own tongue, which was not the tongue approved in her present home.

‘What the dickens is it to *you*, Greek Face? We all know

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what a fine gentleman you are, and how you will wear as many shirts a week as your master, and read poetry lying on the moor, and all the rest of it; but, good gracious, man! that needn't make you swear at Mr. Redwood behind his back! You are a mighty fine fellow, and your airs and graces are quite in keeping. I admire you on the moor, my "stag of ten," as Carnoustie calls you, but I did not admire you particularly in the boat, when you were rather cheeky about Mr. Redwood's rowing; and I did not admire you at all, quite the contrary, just now, when you scowled and growled in your barbarous dialect, and shook your untutored fist at him, thinking no one saw you. Your head's turned, that's what it is, Apollo. You poor fool, can't you see that it isn't *looks* which will send you up the ladder of life?' continued she, contemptuously. Then, after a pause, 'It was really very impertinent, disgracefully impertinent! These Carnousties encourage impertinence by their very pride and egotism. They won't know anyone out of their own world, and their world consists of themselves and their creatures; naturally the creatures get to be as self-important as their betters. Even Tosh talks about "ain o' oorsels" to them; and they all gravely listen. It does not matter for poor silly Tosh; but it is a different thing when Torquil Macalister is encouraged to criticise Mr. Redwood's handling of the oar, and exhibit his superior knowledge before an admiring audience. Here is consequence No. 1. He has the insolence to put himself on a level with one of our guests; and, No. 2, to shake his fist at him. How horrid a man of that class looks when he is in a rage!' with a little uneasy shrug of her shoulders. 'I suppose this Torquil likes to play first fiddle, and be noticed by the gentry, and all that; some of these outdoor servants do. And Mina encourages him, I know she does. I told her the other day I thought she spoke to Torquil Macalister too much on terms of equality, and she would not take the hint; but if she had seen this "poor harmless shepherd," as she called him, just now, I fancy she would alter her tune.'

Presently it was 'There they come with their pail! It is as well it has a lid; they would never carry it to the caves without spilling the half, if they had taken an open can. There goes Torquil Macalister to humbly offer his services. Nay, Torquil, they won't give it up—oh, they have!' witnessing the transference. 'That's as well,' continued Penelope, musing; 'just as well. It may soothe this injured native's ruffled feelings, and it leaves someone else free to come this way—and'—her cheek glowed—'he is looking this way. Perhaps—perhaps he is coming.'

The next moment she was gathering sticks vigorously.

Redwood had suggested that, as Miss Carnoustie no longer needed him, he might perhaps be of use to her cousin. From the side of the mountain spring whence the water had been drawn, his eye had fallen on Penelope, patiently, as he thought, pursuing her self-imposed task; and he had recollected all at once his faithless offer of assistance.

He would now make up for it, if agreeable to his companion.

Oh yes, very agreeable; Mina would be only too glad. Poor Penelope! She would never by herself collect enough driftwood to make a fire. The drift did not come that way. A little further back, where the promontory jutted out, were Penelope to look, she would find plenty of spars and odd pieces of wood, swept up by the ocean waves; and there was abundance of time to gather a good bundle, as they did not lunch till half-past one. Dear mamma liked to rest awhile first.

All of this Redwood took to mean that he was to go and explore the promontory, as well as to aid Penelope. How different was this Mina Carnoustie from most of the girls he had hitherto known! She evinced not the slightest desire to attach him to her side; on the contrary, she almost sent him away; and there was no mistaking the resolution with which she declined his 'You won't come yourself?'

At the moment he made it the water-pail got nearly dashed over against an edge of rock.

'Look out!' cried Redwood, sharply. 'You'll have that pail upset if you don't take care,' he added, annoyed with the carelessness which had threatened another journey to the spring.

'Others than I had best have a care,' retorted Torquil Macalister in his native language; and he set his teeth, and an ugly light flashed from his eyes with the words.

Redwood, however, perceived nothing.

'What does he say?' demanded he of Miss Carnoustie, laughing. 'Do you understand that wild lingo?'

To his amazement she seized his arm and held him back, whilst he caught an apprehensive glance directed towards the stalwart Highlander.

'He is affronted because you called out to him like that,' murmured she. 'Torquil is not accustomed to being ordered about. He will do anything if he is only asked to do it.'

'Oh, that's it! I shall be careful only to "ask" him another time. I did not know he was so sensitive.'

‘Don’t laugh,’ said Mina in the same timid undertone; ‘he will hear you laughing.’

‘Perhaps I had better take myself out of his way? It might be dangerous to provoke his susceptible nervous system.’

He was in jest, but she was quite serious.

‘Yes, do; do go. It really would be better. He will be all right when you come back. Already something has put him out to-day. I knew that in the boat. But I will speak to him.’

‘And soothe his *amour propre*,’ said Redwood lightly. ‘I’ll go, then,’ and he sprang away, and was soon by Penelope’s side.

‘Torquil,’ said Mina Carnoustie, softly, ‘Torquil.’

No one else ever heard Mina speak in such tones as now fell from her lips.

When Penelope and her companion next looked that way the heights were empty, but the two were not at the caves. It was a long time before they entered the caves.

The others, however, were still later, and on any occasion but the present Lady Carnoustie would have been chillingly repellent. To-day, however, she had nothing but a gay reprimand for the three recusants (for Mina joined Redwood and Penelope outside, and no one perceived that she had not been with them all along), and their exertions were applauded as they laid at the feet of their liege lady the pile of driftwood for the fire to be kindled presently. She had never before had a fire at her picnic, and gratefully allowed that it would be a charming innovation to have a cup of tea before starting on the return row.

She then bade them notice what an admirable place had been selected for the repast, and how elegantly it had been set out.

Everybody had been so clever, so willing!

The great cool rocks above formed a delightful protection from the sun, while yet not intercepting the view of the sea and the faint blue hills beyond.

‘Is it not a beautiful view, my dear Penelope?’ concluded the speaker in the plenitude of her satisfaction.

She had appealed to the right person. Penelope was experiencing a renewal of her first enthusiasm on the subject, and the radiance of the sunlit sky and shining ocean was reflected in her glowing countenance as she signified her joyous assent.

Half an hour before she could not have so responded, but now every feeling of discontent had vanished from her breast. She had forgiven Redwood and forgotten Torquil Macalister, and the present moment was to her all that heart could wish.

As Mina also seemed exhilarated beyond her wont, and the rest were proportionately in good-humour, the repast was the gayest Penelope had ever partaken of in company with her new-found relations.

It was more than cheerful, it was merry. There was quite a clatter of dishes and a chinking of glass. Brisk demands flew from lip to lip. Everybody wanted everything at once.

Even Lord Carnoustie, foreseeing a continuance of the settled weather, and in consequence a lucky 'Twelfth'—now close at hand—was in spirits to eat and drink more heartily than was his wont at that hour, and drew corks and cut up pies with a joviality that elicited 'Oh, papa!' constantly from the lips of the tittering and delighted Louisa and Joanna.

A glass of wine was upset into Lady Carnoustie's lap.

Lady Carnoustie begged no one would be discomposed by such a mere trifle. Her good Dickinson had taken the precaution of making her wear an old gown, a gown for which nothing signified, and the stain was not of the slightest consequence.

When such an appalling accident was declared to be not of the slightest consequence, no subsequent disaster or hardship could be thought of for a moment.

When the time for Penelope's tea-making came, for instance, no small exertions and perseverance were required to get that fire to burn. The smoke was frightful—stinging, blinding smoke. Yet Penelope watched and tended and blew, till her eyes were dim and her cheeks blackened in the process, insisting upon it that her fire would reward them all at last.

The kettle toppled over, and the water poured from its mouth; but Redwood flew up the hillside and was back with more before the fire was properly put together again.

There were no tea-spoons, but what did they want with tea-spoons?

And then again Lady Carnoustie came to the front and said how much she enjoyed her tea, and thanked Penelope for the happy thought. Penelope smiled brightly back, standing in the middle of her smoke, teapot in hand.

'You are really a spirit of the mist, my dear Penelope,' was the next rejoinder. 'Your wand has produced this pleasant part of the entertainment, but you yourself remain enshrined in mystery,' and Lady Carnoustie laughed merrily at her simple pun.

Penelope thought that she should never be quite so hard upon Lady Carnoustie after this day.

How often she looked back upon it, how many times in her mind's eye she beheld the little group seated upon the sandy cavern floor, how tenderly she sometimes sighed over the scene in the retrospect, none ever knew; enough to say that it was the last time for many and many a day that she was to look into the faces around without fearing and trembling for what they might read in her own.

It was now five o'clock.

The afternoon had passed swiftly away, each one following her own bent, and none interfering with that of another. Louisa had elected to wash and pack the *débris*; Joanna had sallied forth with her colour-box and sketching block; Mina had offered to find a nook for her mother further along the beach, and to remain with her there; and Lord Carnoustie, Redwood, and Penelope had rambled about.

Redwood had been both cheerful and useful. Penelope had industriously gathered a posy of wild honeysuckle, heather, rowan-berries, and crimson hips and haws with which the braes were teeming, and his knife had been ready and his eye as keen as her own in detecting new and ornamental additions. When she scratched her hand on a rough ledge of rock down which she was sliding in pursuit of sprawling bramble blossoms, he had been sympathetic and commiserative, and had insisted on himself binding the wound, with a jest over the tiny pocket-handkerchief she drew forth for the purpose. He had smiled at the bandage, but it had been an indulgent smile. From first to last he had not seemed to miss Mina—and that was all Penelope wanted. That he should be happy with her, contented in her society, was the utmost she cared about.

Yet that she did care to this extent was certain. She knew it at any rate afterwards.

And then, as we have said, they all came back to the cool shelter of the cave for tea.

By half-past five it was time to be thinking of the return journey.

'Heigho!' said Lord Carnoustie, rising and stretching himself vigorously. 'Well, this has really been a very pleasant day. You could not have had a better day if you had made it on purpose. We have hit the tides, too—at least, we have jockeyed them, for the men say it does not matter in the least the tide's being out down there where they have the boat now. We can get down to her quite easily. Well, we had better be going,' and

he set off, leading the way, with his wife anew attached to his arm. The rest followed, and the homeward pull was achieved without any incident worthy of mention.

Redwood could not remain to dinner, as he was expecting a friend to arrive by the evening steamer. By this time he was so far improved in health and spirits that he had invited one of his former companions to shoot with him, and found himself looking forward to Felix Merriman's company with something even of anticipation. He would tell Felix that he was 'all right;' that he liked the place and the people; that there was but one family in the neighbourhood, but that they could not be improved upon; that, in short, the whole thing suited him; and, finally, he would march Merriman over to Carnoustie Castle and enjoy his astonishment over its impressive grandeur.

'He won't expect anything like it,' Redwood had been chuckling to himself once, when Penelope saw him smiling, and wondered what he was smiling at. He was still living his own life, and chiefly occupied with his own back draughts of thought.

Accordingly he bade 'Farewell' with thanks and pleasant speeches at the castle gates; and set off in a dog-cart which was in waiting, so as to be at Inverashet, or rather at the bottom of the glen, by the time the steamboat hove in sight; and the rest of the party wended their way up the avenue.

As a concession to fatigue they dined at once in their morning dress, after which the elder ladies almost immediately retired to their rooms. It was still early, however, and Lord Carnoustie, who, on the picnic day, did everything he did *not* do at other times, having stepped outside for a round of the farm offices in the cool of the evening, Penelope and Mina took each other into confidence on the subject.

'I am going out too,' whispered the former, as soon as whispering was safe. 'I am not going to miss such a chance. What do you say? You are not going off to your bed?'

Mina looked undecided.

'Oh then, do!' Penelope let her go. 'Only, don't expect me. It is broad daylight.'

'It is daylight nearly all night long, at present.'

'But it is only nine o'clock. I can't go to bed at nine o'clock.'

'One needn't go to bed.'

'Anyhow, you don't want to come with me,' said Penelope, laughing. 'All right. "Let every herring hang by its ain tail!"

as Ailsie says. You do what you like, and I'll do what I like. They won't shut up for another hour or so, I suppose ?'

'Oh no, papa will be out till ten. Besides, the doors are never locked till ten. I can tell them you are out, if you like. But, Penelope, you won't go far at this hour ?'

'Bless you, no ! I'll be in the grounds somewhere, or on the shore. I'll keep close to the lodge if I am on the shore. Only I can't keep indoors to-night, I feel so restless. There's no harm in my going, is there ?' turning round as she was about to depart.

Mina smiled reassuringly. 'Oh dear, no ! I made that all right years ago. I had rather a battle for it, but in the end I conquered. So long as you keep to our own grounds, or to the shore between us and Mr. Soutter's house, you may go alone at any hour of the day. I do, and what I do you may do. Mamma understands that. Good night.'

They kissed each other, and Penelope turned away.

She was not sorry that Mina let her go by herself. Mina had been unusually kind and cousinly throughout the day, and she had felt in a manner bound to invite her to the evening ramble, it being tacitly understood that the two paired off, when left to their own resources ; but she had several interesting items to think over which would hardly have done to talk over.

There was Mina herself, for instance, and Redwood. Redwood had shown himself almost indifferent to her cousin, and had been both kind and pleasant towards herself, not only all day, but for several previous days.

Certainly he had relapsed, or rather he had caught himself up as it were, when essaying to be one of the messengers to the mountain spring ; but then again he had broken off from his companion in order to assist her own quest, and this quest he had prolonged and appeared to enjoy. He had been pertinacious in demanding that the promontory should be explored. Miss Carnoustie had said the drift settled upon it, and the drift was what they were in search of. Penelope, although nothing loth on her own account, had feared to bring down on both the reproach of keeping others waiting, an offence she had learned to correct at Carnoustie Castle ; but Redwood had not seemed to think anything of this.

'Nobody is particular at a picnic,' he said. 'And we were told to go to the promontory ; so to the promontory we must go. We must obey orders.'

It had ended in their having a very pleasant time on the pro-

montory, and Mina had joined them, as we know, outside the cavern entrance. If the latter move on Mina's part had been made with a view to averting her mother's possible displeasure over their unpunctuality, it was good-natured of Mina.

On the other hand, why had Mina suggested and enjoined the unpunctuality?

'I am growing horribly suspicious,' said Penelope, angrily shaking her head at herself. 'I never can allow that poor Mina does anything straight. It has got into me, somehow, that she is a crooked piece of goods, and I look out for the crookedness in every quarter. Why should she not wish Mr. Redwood to take me for a stroll? She knows I like Mr. Redwood; I have said so over and over again. There is no reason why I shouldn't say it. His grave face, over which there just steals the shadow of a smile when I bang at him with my silly nonsense, is more stimulating than if he tried with all his might to be funny back. I don't like funny men. I like to be funny myself, and I like Mr. Redwood's air of saying "You are a goose, but I can't help laughing." That's what suits Penelope very well. He rather likes me now—I know he does; and, dispassionately speaking, I am much more in his line than that sentimental Mina. What could they do but mope and sigh in each other's company if she took up with him? Whereas I would keep him merry, and he would have enough ado to keep me in order. That would be tit for tat. We should do very well—*very* well together. How amused papa would be to be met with the announcement that I had found—my fate! No great match, even if he comes in for the baronetcy, which I doubt his doing. And not rich; though that's nothing, since I shall have plenty. Oh, papa would not object; papa would be very well pleased, I dare say.

'But what nonsense I am talking!' Suddenly Penelope broke into one of her shrill, ringing laughs. 'What ridiculous, absurd, preposterous folly and rubbish! Penelope, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! You know next to nothing about this man. You don't even know that he ever gives you a thought, and, worse than that, you don't know that if he did you would give him one—a serious one—in return; and yet you look on ahead at such a pace that you have got to papa's "Bless my soul! You artful monkey!" in your dreams already. Your dreams, indeed! It is this insinuating, seducing, romantic spot which is to blame. It is these craggy mountain heights, these solemn, long-drawn shadows, the peace, the stillness, that sharp-edged croak of the

landrail in the cornfields behind—it is something in the atmosphere which burns into the soul, and eats away all common-sense and every proper feeling.’

Then she paused.

‘Besides, we are a lazy lot, and “Satan finds some mischief still,” for me as well as for Mina. What *does* that girl do with herself? I should not wonder a bit now, if she never went to bed at all, but just waited till I was out of the way to steal up the burnside by herself. Suppose I go up and catch her? It would be rather a joke. I’ll tease her life out if she has played me such a trick!’ and with girlish delight in the manoeuvre, of which she never afterwards thought without a shudder, Penelope suddenly quickened her steps—she was close to the house—and, turning off at right angles, darted down the slope into the tangles of the glen below.

It was darker there than above, and somewhat daunted by the shade of the over-arching boughs, she paused before traversing the little stony path by the side of the burn, which opened out on to the moor.

‘She would hardly go up there by herself at this time of night,’ quoth Penelope, coming to a standstill. ‘It would be too mad. If she did go, she is back again. I don’t like the look of this ghostly glen in the twilight. No, I’ll not go ferreting after Mina to-night. I’ll put it off, like Tony Lumpkin’s education, to another opportunity,’ turning round to retrace her steps.

A rustle in the brake below caught her attention.

‘Someone is there anyhow,’ murmured she, her heart beating a little. ‘I’d best get home. Can one of the deer have got loose from the park? I don’t like loose deer. They may be as safe as Uncle Carnoustie says they are in August; but they have horns, and creatures with horns are never to be trusted.’

‘There it is again!’ listening.

A murmur of voices stole towards her on the balmy air.

‘Oho! That’s better!’ Penelope felt relieved. ‘Some of the maids sweethearting, poor things! How they must enjoy it! I should like it myself in a place like this. There they are!’ her eye catching the expected pair of figures emerging from the ferny brake. ‘I won’t meet them—it would be unkind,’ quickly and easily secreting herself in the gloom of some thick bushes above the path. ‘And I will never tell; for, after all, maids must have their sweethearts as well as other people; and the girl is going home now, and will be in by ten o’clock. Hark! there is the

stable clock chiming a quarter to ten now. Get on, you Maggie, or Jenny, or whoever you are; get on, can't you now? Cut short your leave-taking, and say "Good-bye" smartly, for I must get in by ten myself, and I shall have to wait till you and your swain are clear off the field.'

The two figures approached.

Closer and closer they came to where Penelope crouched in the bushes, the man's arm round the woman's waist, her head upon his shoulder.

It might have been a simple, touching attitude; there was nothing displeasing to the eye in the fondness of a pair of rustic lovers, nothing jarring to the ear in their tender murmurings; what was it, then, which all on a sudden caused the unseen beholder to start and quiver from head to foot—to pant forth a name, with gasping breath and rushing pulses, and wild, throbbing eyeballs?

What was the name that burst from Penelope's lips?

CHAPTER XXIV.

'A PINK GINGHAM FROCK.'

SHE had found out her cousin's secret at last.

Others besides the Israelitish monarch of old have screamed in affright before the spectre conjured up at their own desire, and the first impulse of the appalled Penelope was to fall upon the earth for very shame and horror.

What had she seen? A sight to haunt her to her dying day.

Whom? A noble maiden of ancient lineage, in whose veins flowed the blood of a long line of ancestors, whose thoughts and imaginings had been fed from infancy with proud traditions of the past and dreams of the future, yielding a response to the presumptuous aspirations of a low-born menial!

Her cousin Mina—Mina Carnoustie—Mina on whom the fondest hopes were placed, and the most tender affections lavished!

On this point Penelope had never been misled. She had always seen that coldness and reserve meant nothing in Mina's case, that she was the cherished object of the stately home, its pride, its ornament.

That Mina should so fall from her high estate! The shock was stunning, bewildering. Again and again Penelope caught

herself saying, 'It cannot be—it *cannot* be.' She must have been mistaken; a hideous vision had passed before her and blinded her sight.

But back upon her memory there swept a flood of terrible recollections. First one thing and then another threw themselves, as it were, before her eyes, and demanded her remembrance.

Mina's secrecy—her double-dealing—her agitation over trifles—her concealment of apparently simple matters—the gradual withdrawal of her confidence and intercourse—the episode of the silver brooch: all pointed the one way, and all with one wild burst of realisation overwhelmed the mind.

Penelope put her hands before her eyes.

'I am dreaming—dreaming,' she muttered; but, alas! she knew it was no dream.

In the dark she heard her own sobbing, loud and regardless.

The pair had passed on, passed down the little path, and were soon lost to view.

'Oh, I *know* I was mistaken!' cried Penelope, aloud. 'I know it! I know it! I could not see clearly. Mina is in her own room, high up among those castle turrets. She is not here, all alone, at this late hour; she has not stolen out to meet a——' She shuddered from head to foot.

The dusk descended suddenly. She heard a quick step back, and shrank again behind her bushy screen. It was Torquil Macalister returning to his mountain solitudes, where at this season he often passed the night in some rude bothy or temporary shelter.

He had parted from his companion. He looked joyous and contented—a different man from the sullen savage who had already once to-day crossed the path of an unseen spectator.

This then was the solution of his anger against Redwood. He had seen in Redwood a rival, and one at advantage. It was more than his passionate spirit could brook, until assured that of Redwood he need have no fears.

Penelope now called to mind how Torquil had dashed up the hill-side to meet the water carriers, and how almost immediately afterwards Redwood had quitted the party, leaving him and Mina together.

She also recollected that the bronzed countenance of the Highlander had worn an air of covert exultation, while he carried his head high, and swung his oar as though in the very bravado of strength and skill, on the homeward journey. She had noted

at the time Torquil's altered demeanour; but deeming it due to some trifle of little consequence—the commendation of his master, or the gracious acknowledgment of his mistress, or possibly the good meal provided for the rowers in their own nook on the sands—had only fancied the shepherd a shade less disagreeable when in good humour than in bad. His handsome face could not cover the repulsive expression of his eye and brow, whether it were of insolent self-esteem or malignity.

Alas! all was now explained!

And Mina? Had she appointed then this tryst? And was it for this she had evaded Penelope, and feigned weariness? Too surely.

That was, supposing it were Mina; but might it not even yet be some other than her cousin?

With the thought Penelope staggered to her feet.

She would not condemn without proof—absolute proof—proof positive. The clothes, the little shawl in which the head was enveloped, the movements, the murmurs, all indeed were Mina's; but she cried out in the aching solicitude of her heart that Mina's face she had not seen; and might it not be possible—barely possible—that all the rest might be accounted for?

Mina asleep in bed, might not her own little maid, a girl about the height of her mistress, have taken leave to borrow the pretty dress and drapery; and might not Penelope, misled by these wrappings, have fitted in the rest from her own imaginings?

She would know the truth, and soon.

The next minute saw her hastening down the bank, stumbling in the uncertain light against this and that projection, but heedless of every obstacle, hurrying along in the direction of the castle.

'Hi! Penelope, is that you?' called a voice from behind.

It was Lord Carnoustie returning from his round.

'Why did you not come along with me if you wanted a turn?' said he, good-humouredly. 'I thought you were off to bed, the whole set of ye. Then I see Mina flying in just now, and here are you flying after her.'

'Did Mina go in just now, uncle?' Penelope's heart sickened.

'Aye, not five minutes ago. We have all been our own ways, then. She was not with you?'

'No, uncle,' faintly.

'And why did neither of you come with me? I was just round by the farm and stables, taking a look at everything. It would have amused you to come.'

'I—I was on the shore.'

‘On the shore? Why, you were coming from the hill!’

‘I went there for a few minutes, to see if Mina——’ She could not go on.

‘Oh, you were looking after her? Set your mind at rest then. She’s in. She ran out of the wood before I could get up to it; but I saw her plainly enough.’

‘Which door did she go in by, uncle?’

‘Which door? This door’—they were entering by a garden entrance, only used by the family. ‘She crossed the bridge, just as you have done,’ continued Lord Carnoustie, ‘and came straight up here. I thought you must have been together.’

‘We have—missed—each other.’ If the voice of the speaker were husky and strained, no one noticed it but herself. ‘I will go and say “Good-night” to Mina. Good-night, uncle,’ and Penelope slowly turned away.

The worst was being confirmed by his unsuspecting testimony.

Still she resolutely ascended the staircase leading to her cousin’s room, and, not allowing herself time to think, tapped at the door. Oh, if Mina were only in bed—only in bed! And if the pink gingham dress were abstracted—only abstracted!

Penelope had a curious feeling as if that amount of evidence would be all-sufficient to outweigh the rest, that she would assure herself she had no need to press for more. She would be content. To demand further explanation would be unnecessarily exacting.

No one answered her first feeble summons, nor was there a sound audible from within. She snatched at this.

‘She is in bed—she is asleep!’ cried Hope in her breast; but the next moment Fear dashed the intruder aside. A second low tap at the door elicited a distinct rustling sound within the chamber, and the door was suddenly opened, in place of the applicant’s being invited to enter.

‘Penelope? Oh, what do you want?’ said Mina, in some surprise. ‘Have you been here long? I did not hear you till now.’

No confusion in her eye, no tremor in her voice. Could she have acted the part before?

One glance had destroyed the last ray of hope in Penelope’s bosom. Not only had Mina the alert step and voice, the vivacity impossible to connect with drowsiness, but she wore the gingham dress, and a bunch of rowan-berries had been added since the girls parted.

Seeing that on these Penelope’s eyes fell, Mina with a hasty movement drew them out and tossed them aside.

'I ought to have been getting ready for virtuous repose, instead of dressing up at this hour, ought I not?' She laughed carelessly. 'But the truth is I could not resist seeing whether scarlet rowans could be worn with this pink frock or not. You know I am so fond of wearing rowans; but red and pink do not go well together, I am afraid. What do you think?' She lifted the little spray again, and held it against the bosom of her frock.

'Not very well.' Penelope's rejoinder was almost inaudible; she was struggling against betrayal.

'No, they don't,' said Mina, coolly. 'I must condemn them to the water-glass;' and she occupied herself in filling a vase, and placing the cluster of berries and leaves therein. 'There, that is better. Well, now, we had better say "Good-night," hadn't we?' advancing for a kiss. Then, as with a second thought, 'But what did you come for, Penelope? Did you want anything?'

'Uncle Carnoustie said he saw you run across the bridge and in by the garden door just now,' said Penelope with an effort. 'I—I thought he might be mistaken. You—you were not going out.'

As she spoke, she fancied that even in the dusky light—for no candles were lit, there being still a gleam in the heavens without—she thought she could perceive that a conscious stain dyed the other's cheek. Mina certainly paused before replying.

'Papa saw me, did he?' She affected to busy herself with the articles on her toilet table, turning her back on her interrogator. 'I did not see him. It was a pity we did not meet, if he wanted a companion. I suppose that was it? He was surprised at seeing me out, after bidding me "Good-night" with the rest. But really, when I came to think of it, I agreed with you that it was absurd to expect one to sleep at nine o'clock, so I went out after all, Penelope; I found that, like you, I was restless, and could not stay in the house. I seemed to need a little exercise after such a long day of sitting still. And it is such a warm, delicious evening——' She paused for a rejoinder.

None came.

'Did—did papa send you up to me?' A slight curiosity manifested itself here.

'No.' For the life of her, Penelope could not utter another syllable.

'Oh! I thought he might; that was all. He might have wondered at my being out.'

'He did not say so. He is very—unsuspecting.'

'Of course; and what was there to suspect?'

'Besides, I was out too.'

'To be sure. We were all "tripping" if anyone was;' an attempted laugh. 'No one of the three can "cast it up" to the other, eh, Penelope?'

Penelope did not laugh. The speaker shot a glance of inquiry, as with one hand she began to unpin a collar brooch, and with the other affected to stifle a yawn. Did this visit mean anything, or not?

No, of course not. Penelope was only in a tiresome mood. Perhaps she wanted to stop and talk—talk about the day's adventures—about Redwood—about any stupid, frivolous topic that was uppermost in her silly mind? That was not to be endured, and accordingly, 'Hurry up now, as you would say,' cried Mina, with good-humoured impatience. 'You have taught me to say, "Hurry up," Penelope, so it is fair you should have it turned against you. Have you anything to say, or not? It is too late to begin conversation, you know; but if you *want* anything——'

'Only to know if it really was you—really *you*,' said Penelope, in a low voice. 'I—at first I did not believe it, but——'

'Me? Oh, dear me, yes; it was me sure enough. By the way, "me" is not correct grammar, is it, Penelope? What would mamma have said? One can't bother with grammar when one is tired and sleepy. You take my word for it, it was me,' pushing her gently through the doorway. 'What? You thought it was my wraith, did you?' a happy idea occurring. 'That is at the bottom of all this, is it? Oho! You got a fright, Miss Penelope. You saw something, or papa saw something, and you and he put your wise heads together, and could not rest without clearing up the mystery? *Now* I begin to understand! Oh, dear me, how amusing! Who would have accused such a very modern young lady as you of being superstitious? Oh, well; you may tell papa, with my best respects, that it was no apparition he saw flitting across the bridge in the moonlight, but just my own self in my own proper person. You know what a "wraith" is, don't you?'

Penelope was turning slowly away.

'It is the spirit of a living man or woman,' called Mina gaily after her. 'But be reassured, my dear Penelope, it was not my "wraith" which was abroad to-night.' She laughed and shut the door.

'Would God it had been!' The laugh was answered by a heavy sigh, the reassurance by a starting sob.

CHAPTER XXV.

‘HOW IF IT WERE LOVE?’

What daunts thee now? What shakes thee so?

My sad soul say;

I see a cloud like curtain low

Hang o’er my way.—WHITTIER.

AND now Penelope must needs look her knowledge in the face. It availed no longer to cheat herself with fond hopes and ingenious suppositions, since Mina’s own assurances had merrily dispelled every doubt, and her own lips had blown away the last shred of uncertainty.

How gay had been Mina’s deceitful tongue—how easily had it worked! No confusion; no shame; scarce a blush upon her brow! After the first momentary hesitation about admitting an intruder on her privacy, she had almost seemed to enjoy an encounter which afforded such opportunity for masquerading.

Her plausible defence had been set in smiles.

With a fresh sickening of the heart, Penelope had hearkened to her glib comments, her well-feigned suggestions, and noted the ring of tenderness in the accents which called up afresh the ‘warm, delicious evening’ turned to such account.

Good Heavens! that one so fair and young could be so base!

And then arose another, and a still more terrible after-thought. Could anyone, confronted by such a risk as her cousin had run that evening, have met it as Mina had done if it had been encountered for the first time? Mina was by nature timid, shrinking, cowardly. It could have been nothing but familiarity with danger which had eventually made her bold.

How often—and when—and where—had the scene in effect been acted before now? How many times had the idle inquiry, or perchance the remonstrance of tender solicitude, been turned aside by careless demeanour and light repartee?

Penelope herself must have been a constant source of anxiety, yet it was clear that even to her cousin the treacherous girl had grown by degrees habituated. She had become an adept in her art.

As they had already done, recollections and half-slumbering suspicions now stormed anew the heart of the tortured Penelope;

while every trivial incident whose passing impression had previously faded from her memory stood out once more to view, and refused to bear any other interpretation than that which explained the whole.

She found that from the very first day of her arrival at Carnoustie Castle, her cousin had been an enigma. She called to mind the first walk she and Mina had taken together; the bitterness expressed by the latter against her own people (a warmth of condemnation which had surprised Penelope, but which was now only too easily understood), and the romantic exultation with which the feats and prowess of Torquil Macalister had been dwelt upon—exultation which had then seemed only in the eyes of the stranger girl as amusingly exemplifying the family conceit. Mina had glorified everything and everybody belonging to her noble race; and whilst inveighing openly against their demerits, had secretly taken credit even for the stalwart bearing and valour of a family retainer.

Mina had shown absurd sensitiveness on the point. Her face had turned crimson with anger when Penelope, without a thought of offence, had quizzed Lord Carnoustie's fondness for his fool and farm servant, classing them together. Penelope, perceiving the effect of her jest, had, girl-like, used it as a weapon for teasing. Eventually she had had to drop the teasing.

Then there had been Ailsie's hints. With a sudden start, she now remembered Ailsie's anxiety, injunctions, and precautions. She had attributed them, as we know, to fears on the part of the old woman regarding her nursling's health, but now she knew that it was not of health Ailsie had been thinking.

That Ailsie knew all, that she knew as much as Penelope did, was not for a moment to be supposed, but that she was painfully on the alert, seeking to guard against some evil which might yet be averted—scotched, as it were, without being brought to the light—seemed only too probable.

That no one else, neither father nor mother nor sisters, had experienced the veriest ripple upon the smooth surface of their implicit faith in Mina—Mina, who was to them the embodiment of youthful innocence and guilelessness—was apparent to the meanest understanding.

What, then, was Penelope to do? How was she to bear her part in the drama whose black shadow hung in front?

All through the long, light night, which seemed as though it would never end, she thought and thought. At times she wept,

incited thereto by some straying emotion of tenderer quality than those which for the most part had dominion over her soul; but tears did not relieve her over-charged bosom, and soon dried, giving way afresh to shuddering contempt, and wild, fruitless wrath.

This again resolved itself into the helpless interrogation: 'What am I to do?'

To keep her detestable secret to herself was the last answer to such a demand. An involuntary spy she had been, an informer she might be, but no thought of sheltering herself behind the fear of such imputations entered into Penelope's heart.

Its only thought, its sole desire, was first how to save, and next how to shield her erring cousin.

Mina had entered upon a downward course, whose incline is ever frightfully rapid and perilous.

She must be stopped instantly, and stopped effectually.

How was this to be done?

To go to Mina's father? Lord Carnoustie would roar with rage, lock his daughter into her room, hound Torquil Macalister out of the district, and imagine that he had stamped out the whole disgraceful affair, even while smarting from the wound to the end of his days. Add to which, the whole countryside would ring with the tale; and it would be handed on from parent to child, till generations yet unborn would hear its echoes.

The same result would follow any allegations made before any member of the family. The truth ascertained, a high-handed policy would ensue, with widespread publicity and disgrace as its side issues; and perhaps—who could tell?—a defeat at the hands of the offending pair in the long run.

Mina was just the girl to be crushed for the moment, and to revive presently, upon a lower and still baser level.

She would weep copiously, and promise abundantly, but would she give up the chief solace of her dull, uninteresting life, and consent to forego the sweets of love once tasted, at the commands of parents who had already shown themselves callous to its claims?

Penelope had heard Louisa's version of Mina's love story. Louisa had enjoyed relating the exciting incident, which always held a foremost place in the family annals; and having described with unction how complete had been the rout of the besieger and the triumph of the victorious garrison, had been not a little surprised to hear Penelope mutter: 'Poor thing! What a shame!'

as her eye fell on the unconscious form of Mina in the garden below.

Mina had realised the strength of the forces around. She had seen it was hopeless to contend with them openly, and to her view the cruelty which had slammed the door without hesitation on her one chance of a happier lot, justified both her lasting resentment and her secret opposition.

Beneath Mina's soft and gentle exterior there rankled a festering spirit of rebellion. She owed one and all a grudge. Perchance the first beginnings of her present infatuation had had their source in that emotion.

They had not cared how they thwarted her—she would not care how she baffled them. For no reason—for the poor girl had never been told even of the paltry reason there was—they had turned away from the door a suitor, whose voice she had already learned to listen for, and towards whom every encouragement consistent with her own ideas of cold stiff dignity had previously been given—and why should she hesitate in future to choose for herself who should be his successor?

Her feelings were nothing to them—theirs should be nothing to her.

All this was now unfolded, and, as it were, spread out before Penelope's eyes.

She saw the whole, first bit by bit, then in one complete mosaic.

Wounded in her tender youth, nipped in her budding womanhood, all the sweet sap of Mina Carnoustie's nature had turned to gall, and the gentle, yielding, trustful child had given place to the artful and double-faced woman.

Ah! if she had been differently treated in those early days!

Now it was too late. Penelope, a very child herself, yet wise with the wisdom so sorely needed, and so hopelessly lacking in her elders, perceived one thing with appalling clearness of vision at the present moment. No coercion, no supervision, would strike to the root of the evil which threatened her noble kith and kin.

Lord and Lady Carnoustie might do their utmost, they would but blazon abroad their own disgrace, and Mina, desperate, might descend to still lower depths than those to which she had stooped as yet.

Was there anyone Penelope could trust to bring her poor, foolish cousin to her senses?

Again and again she put the question to herself, varying it, sifting it, wringing from it in an agony each reiterated response of 'None.'

Then she would fling herself across the bed, and clench and tear the coverlid.

Something must be done—some one must do it.

Torquil Macalister must be prevailed upon to quit the place; authoritatively, or Torquil would laugh the request to scorn; persuasively, or Torquil's sullen spirit might revolt.

That the shepherd was not actuated by mere audacity and insolent ambition, Penelope owned with a fresh sinking of the heart. She could have dealt with this baser metal; but it would be a harder matter to quench in a vehement, passionate, undisciplined nature, the fire of love. It was love, however mis-directed, which she had seen either aflame in fury, as on the rocky sea-shore, or melting in tenderness a few hours later on the quiet wood path. The mountaineer had lifted his eyes high, but he had shot their bolt straight.

That he was simply allowing himself to bask in the present without thought of the future, was the most rational solution of his presumptuous folly. Possibly it had been begun by some act of daring on his part, some feat which had elicited from Mina applause—or anxiety—or tears. Who could tell how long she had been watching him, marking him, admiring him in secret, before that day came? And there had been an explosion, and a revelation, and all barriers had fallen before the tumult.

But whatever might be the strength of his own feelings or of hers, it was impossible to suppose that either Mina Carnoustie or her presumptuous lover could imagine for a single moment that they could dare to hope for anything further.

Each must be equally well aware that recognition and sanction was not for them; and yet they were meeting in secret, and meeting constantly, at what hazard to both each knew only too well.

Perchance the sense of danger might be feeding the fuel of Mina's stolen happiness; but it could hardly be adding to that of a penniless menial, since detection must mean to him the sure and certain loss of all but life itself.

As a retainer of Lord Carnoustie's, he enjoyed a good position, an easy life, abundance for his simple requirements, and a field for the display of his simple vanity. Until the daughter of his lord stooped to cast over him the glamour of a new emotion,

he had been content with his station, his surroundings, and himself.

The question now was, would the genuine passion with which Torquil Macalister had been inspired, yield to representations and entreaties? Would he consent to vanish decorously, once he learned that discovery had been made, and exposure was imminent?

Who could say?

Had the shepherd been actuated by a mere frenzy of ambition it would not have been difficult to deal with that ambition. Lord Carnoustie might have been enlightened, or semi-enlightened; might have been warned, at least, that trouble was in the wind, and induced quietly to rid himself of the offender, by procuring for him a better situation elsewhere.

He might even have done more. The offer of a farm on one of the Carnoustie estates in another county might have satisfied the claims of a humble subordinate, to whom such promotion meant an important rise in life.

Was it impossible that even yet the complication might not thus be adjusted, supposing Penelope were to confide in her uncle; he would give Macalister the hint, the separation would be effected noiselessly, without let or hindrance, and Mina herself need never know that mortal eyes had penetrated her secret?

For a moment, Penelope's heart leaped at the thought. She might thus never have to seek the dreaded interview, and tear the mask from her cousin's face. She might never be called upon to bring the blush of shame to Mina's cheek, and to hear her faltering avowal.

Mina's father, quietly admonished, talked to, reasoned with, and not told too much, might be induced to control himself, and adopt the course proposed. More particularly if Lord Carnoustie knew that he was alone in Penelope's confidence. Lord Carnoustie, when not badgered and worried, and told how he was to think and to feel, not infrequently came in the end to the frame of mind he ought to have been in at the beginning, and it was quite likely that, acting on his own responsibility, he might act with dignity and delicacy under his present trial.

But even if the old lord, impelled by stress of circumstances, acted as became him, who was to answer for the success of his overtures, considering the nature of the man with whom he had to do?

Torquil Macalister, grimly tenacious, and snapping his fingers

at the enraged threats of his unhappy master, rose before Penelope's shuddering vision, a sharp, distinct figure. She had told herself that he might be managed if he had merely been intoxicated by the honour of his dubious position, but should it be proved that he scoffed at the idea of bartering pardon and promotion for love—love however hopeless and misplaced—what could be done?

The night wore slowly on.

Penelope, half in half out of her little open window, watched the pale light of dawn glimmer across the ocean, and gradually steal athwart the sky. Her eyes, her cheeks, her hands were burning hot. She had never slept, nor laid herself down to sleep; and now the morning had come, and the birds were beginning to twitter among the branches.

Something must be thought of, and it seemed as if there were nothing left to think about.

The spreading light of day chilled every vein, for in it she saw the approach of the struggle, in which she—oh, misery! was there no way out of it!—must march to the front, and open her batteries, secure of nothing, dreading everything.

Slowly she undressed and laid herself upon the bed. The clock struck three, and, worn out at length, the unhappy girl fell into a wretched, muttering slumber, whose dreams were haunted by the same spectres which had made frightful the waking hours which preceded them.

She was on the craggy moorland, amid driving mists and darkness; lurking precipices beset her on every side; she durst not stir; she could not articulate a sound.

The cry of another, however, smote upon her ear; the loud agonised entreaty of one in mortal peril; and, straining her eyes in the thickening gloom, she discerned dimly a form—the form of her cousin Mina—flitting along a rugged ledge which overhung a terrible abyss.

Again and again the wild appeal was borne towards her, as the figure, weeping and wringing its hands, now leaned over the horrid chasm, now fled into the mists behind.

Fain would she have hastened to the rescue, but her feet, heavy as lead, were glued to the ground whereon she stood; and when she would have responded to the piteous cries her tongue refused to do its work.

And then—ah, heaven!—what happened then? The taunting mist wreaths took shape, and formed themselves into the like-

ness of a man, whose face she could not see, but whose deed was devilish—for he sprang up the face of the rock, and flew at the girl, and while she shrank, and wept, and implored, he locked her in his arms and, laughing aloud, leaped into the gulf whence he had come.

Penelope, with a smothered shriek, awoke. Her cheeks were streaming with tears.

Some one was calling to her through the half-open door, for the sun was high in the heavens, and Mina was already fully dressed and prepared to descend to the breakfast-room. It was Mina's voice which was summoning her cousin to rise and bear her part in the coming day.

CHAPTER XXVI.

'WHAT HAPPENED HERE,' SHE SAID, 'LAST NIGHT?'

'LAZY GIRL!' said Mina affectionately, as Penelope appeared half an hour afterwards. 'You cannot say you were not called when I was, Penelope; I heard a great rattling going on at your door, long before I went by. And Marie—but—why—are you not well, dear?' suddenly perceiving the pallor and strained eyelids which it was impossible should long evade observation. 'Was yesterday's excursion too much for you?'

Penelope murmured an inaudible response.

'I am so sorry,' said Mina, coming round the table to her. 'You have a headache, I can see. Mamma will doctor you; she knows all about headaches. And you must lie down in a cool room after breakfast. I wish you had not come down; I would have taken a tray up to you myself.'

'Indeed, Penelope looks far from well,' Lady Carnoustie took up the note. 'My dear, I am glad you made the effort to appear; but you might have known I should excuse you, if you were really indisposed. A long day like yesterday—'

'Hoots—a long day!' It was now Lord Carnoustie's turn. 'A long fiddlestick!' he ejaculated scornfully. 'A lassie who can be running about at all hours of the night—oh, I'm not to say anything about that, amn't I?' perceiving signals of distress, 'oh, well—well; it was all right; Penelope and I were out for a

bit in the evening, that was all,' to his wife, who was beginning to look inquiries—'and Mina, she was out too. There was no harm in it, none in the world, so you needn't *glower* at us,' testily championing his co-delinquents. 'You took yourself off at such an unearthly hour, that no one could be expected to follow you; and it was a warm evening, so we took a turn—we each took a turn—that was all.'

'Yes, indeed, mamma, that was all,' said Mina, cheerfully.

Penelope's lip trembled. That cheerful accent cut her like a knife.

She noted that Mina's cup and plate were emptied as usual; fancied even that she had a better appetite than usual.

Certainly she was bustlingly attentive to the wants of others, and pressed the delicacies of the meal upon her cousin, who, contrary to her wont, appreciated neither the freshly-caught trout, nor the new-laid eggs, nor yet the honey, marmalade, and floury scones and cakes with which the table abounded.

Usually Penelope made an excellent figure at the repast. She was wont to say that until she came to Carnoustie Castle she had never known what a real breakfast was; and her host was delighted to remind her of this on the slightest indication of flagging energies. He said he could count upon Penelope to clear off the remains in every dish—and this was always a point with him. With nearly a score of servants in the kitchen, and any number of casual dependents greedy for scrap meals, he could not endure to see odds and ends of food neglected at his own table, and would prefer that even those who had no desire for more should consume the remnant, than that it should go downstairs. All in vain had it been pointed out to him a hundred times that the waste he perceived in the latter alternative was purely in his own imagination; he stuck to his whim, and Penelope was delighted with him for doing so. She would not, perhaps, have owned as much, but she was still a growing, hungry girl, albeit twenty years of age. She had taken a start, as young people occasionally do, somewhat late in life, and had added another inch to her stature during the previous six months.

Accordingly, the good food and the novel food she found in the old Scottish castle was a considerable enjoyment to her healthy young frame; and since Lord Carnoustie wanted the dishes cleared, she was willing to clear them when no one else would; wherefore he had grown to reckon upon her.

But on this morning, as can readily be imagined, nothing

tasted aright, and to eat at all required a strong effort. It was with a feeling of relief that she quitted the table at last.

She had, however, come to no decision in her own mind. She was still battling between a dozen opinions, and still torn in pieces by a thousand fears.

'Come and see Ailsie,' said Mina, linking her arm in that of her cousin. 'Ailsie likes us to look in about this time. Besides, she had not heard anything about yesterday. We are always expected to tell her about the picnic——'

'Did you enjoy the picnic, Mina?'

'Did I? Of course I did—as much as I ever do. Why do you speak in that sepulchral tone? And look at me with that lugubrious expression? I suppose you found it dreary; but we are not used to your more exciting festivities, and we are quite satisfied. Certainly the weather was fine enough.'

'Yes; fine—and calm—and still—like all the rest,' said Penelope, fixing her eyes upon her. 'As you say, there were no exciting elements in the whole affair, everybody and everything was entirely serene and commonplace. Even the boatmen——' She paused.

'Even the boatmen were very ordinary boatmen,' said Mina, 'but they rowed well, and that was all we wanted of any of them. Except Mr. Redwood, of course—Mr. Redwood is—eh, Penelope?' pressing her arm archly.

The arm slightly trembled.

'You do look bad, you poor little creature,' cried Mina, next. 'You are regularly shaking—I felt you just now. Come up to your room, and I will come and sit with you; read to you, perhaps.'

'No, no.'

'You would rather go to sleep? But you have only just got up! Well, here is Ailsie, she will prescribe for you. Ailsie, here is Miss Penelope eating no breakfast, and very white in the face, to say nothing of red in the eyes. What can you do for her?'

'It's the heat,' said Ailsie, peering with friendly commiseration. 'Let me look at your tongue, missy. 'Deed, an' it's no sae muckle amiss. It's reid—no white. Aye, I'm thinkin' it'll be jist the heat. Lie doon a wee and I'll get ye somethin'——'

'No, thank you, Ailsie; I want nothing.'

But on a sudden it occurred to her that she did want something; she wanted Ailsie herself. To Ailsie's faithful ear she

would confide her root of bitterness ; with her she would take counsel ; and between them they might perhaps—perhaps——

‘May I lie down here for a little?’ she suggested, looking round. ‘The maids are upstairs in the bedrooms.’

‘I could tell them to finish yours quickly,’ said Mina.

‘But still they would be all about, rushing back and forwards, and making a noise.’ Penelope put her hand to her head. ‘If Ailsie does not mind I will stay here ; it is so cool and pleasant,’ sinking down into the huge chintz-covered armchair, which fitted into the open window.

‘And you don’t want talking, do you?’ said Mina.

Penelope hesitated.

She did not want talking of the kind her cousin meant, but she was too truthful to avail herself of the evasion. ‘I should like to talk to Ailsie a little,’ she said gently. ‘If you will not think it rude, Mina, I would rather have her to myself.’

‘Aye, she’ll tell me what’s wrang wi’ her,’ added Ailsie, confident that this was to be the communication and flattered by the tribute to her medical skill. ‘Jist you leave us thegither, Meenie, an’ I’ll see to her. Noo then, dearie,’ as Mina nodded and tripped away ; ‘Noo then, jist tell auld Ailsie what’s wrang. Maybe something’s gane agley wi’ ye ? Maybe yer faither—is’t the post whattan’s brocht ye ill news ?’—running over all the suppositions she could think of to make the confidence more easy.

But Penelope shook her head.

She was sitting rigid and strained, her hands clasped, her dry lips apart. It seemed as if she could not bring herself to speak.

At length, ‘Is the door locked?’ she whispered.

‘Locked? Na ; there’ll naeboddy come in, wi’out it’s ane o’ oorsels, an’——’

‘It’s one of ourselves I most dread, Ailsie. Lock the door.’

‘Na, Miss Penelope, we munna. Bide a wee noo,’ as Penelope made a motion to rise and herself carry out her command. ‘Hark to me,’ said the old woman, gently stretching forth a detaining hand. ‘If yon door’s snebbit, it’ll mak a stir. A’body kens yon door is niver snebbit ; and what then for suld it be snebbit when you and me’s oor lane ? That’ll gar them wonder. Let-a-be, there’s a gude bairn ; and if onybody seeks to wun in——’

‘Promise me that you will stop them—that you won’t let them come in. They must not ! They must not !’

'Na ; they shanna. Dinna be feared,' patting her hand soothingly. 'Jist you say your say——'

'Ailsie, you don't know—you *don't know*—what my "say" is.'

Something in the tone arrested Ailsie's stroking fingers. Instinctively she was on her guard.

'Na, my bairn, I dinna ken. Aiblins it's aboot your faither——'

'It has nothing to do with my father.'

Ailsie coughed discreetly.

'Aiblins there's some young gentleman——'

'Gentleman? No.'

Ailsie coughed again.

'Aweel, ye ken, I'm no guid at the guessin'. An', Miss Penelope, the time's gangin' by,' she hinted.

'I know—I know. But oh! it is such a dreadful thing I have to tell. Ailsie,' quickly, 'is that anyone at the door? I am sure I heard someone outside the door.'

'I dinna think it, dearie——'

'There is; I tell you, there is. Someone is breathing there now, and the light in the passage is gone.' Then suddenly bounding from her seat, she was at the door before the supposed eavesdropper could vanish, and, throwing it open, disclosed the form of her cousin Mina.

'I just came to bring you this little draught from mamma,' said Mina sweetly. But Penelope dashed the glass out of her hand.

'That ends it!' she cried, quivering from head to foot. 'Ailsie, I don't need you now. I have got someone else. Yes, you,' to her cousin. 'You, Mina, *you*,' clutching her fiercely by the arm. 'I would have spared you if I could, though I hardly knew how; but now—come quickly, come,' dragging her prisoner along with an authority that brooked no demur. 'We can end this farce now. I am not ill. I am not in need of physick. It is *you*—you who——'

'Hush! They will see you—they will hear you. Hush! I say. For Heaven's sake, Penelope, do not speak so loud. And let go my arm. I will come with you; I will do anything you wish, only don't—don't——'

'Don't what?' demanded Penelope in a loud, rasping voice.

'Let people hear you, dear.' The words were almost breathed into her ear.

'Ah—Bah!' cried Penelope, flinging away the hand laid on hers. 'That's all *you* care for. You can lie, and cheat, and——'

'Penelope! Penelope!'

'Don't speak to me. Wait till I speak to you. Don't dare to speak to me. How dare you call me by my name?'

The anguish of the night had gathered itself together into a storm of fury, and the speaker, beside herself with passion, was unaware of the height of her voice.

To Mina, however, this for the moment was the one consideration. How should she quell those penetrating tones? What would be the immediate result of this loud, uncontrolled onslaught?

The servants were in every corner, emerging from doorways hurrying along passages, busy with their morning's work; if they were to overhear and repeat—she *must* get Penelope silenced.

'Come in here,' Penelope was beginning, as the two approached their several rooms, but both rooms were occupied. Even the speaker perceived that nothing could be done then and there, and Mina, snatching at her opportunity, laid hold of it. 'Come where we can be alone, and I will hear you, hear every word you have to say, and—and do whatever you wish,' she murmured, in agitation scarcely less than that of her companion. 'Quick—your hat,' taking it down from the wardrobe, 'and here is mine,' fetching her own. 'Now come out—out of the house—where we can talk, and no one can hear, or interrupt; you are so very careless, dear Penelope.'

'Careless!' Penelope laughed a mocking, stinging laugh. 'Careless! Never mind. *You* are careful enough. Careless? I wonder if I shall ever be careless again, after what I have seen, after what I saw last night.'

Swift as thought, Mina perceived that the bolt had fallen.

Until this moment she had had no time to think, or consider how much had become known to her cousin, how much had been conjectured, and how much might yet be concealed. That Penelope by some means or other had possessed herself of information which had roused her anger and contempt, was, of course, palpable, but might not such information be vague, uncertain, undefined?

She would, of course, have to meet very awkward charges, and pass an uncomfortable hour or so; and she would most certainly have to be more vigilant and discreet in the future than she had been in the past, for of late she had had more than one narrow es-

cape; but she thought she could manage Penelope, if only Penelope could be got out of the house, and out of the range of others, whom it might not be so easy to turn aside.

Penelope, instructed by her cousin, had been led to suppose that many of Mina's ways were permitted, nay sanctioned, which she might now have to learn were simply unknown. A great deal would come to light if this impulsive girl were to blaze forth her accusation in the presence of bystanders.

Accordingly Mina cowered in her secret soul at the sound of Penelope's voice, and scarce breathed until the garden door was left behind, and all fear of being overheard was passed.

Cunning, the coward's instinct, then re-asserted itself. Penelope must be entreated, cajoled, bought over. Little did she know Penelope!

Penelope meanwhile was rushing down the slope, heedless of dewy grass and bushes. An idea had occurred which she was impatient to carry into effect, and paying no heed to the lagging steps of her companion who would fain have proceeded more slowly, she hurried across the little bridge and plunged into the wood.

Where in the world was she going?

Doubt, however, was quickly laid at rest. Only a few hundred yards up the narrow incline, and just after it took a turning, Penelope raised her hand, and with the other laid hold of her cousin's dress, and called a halt.

Her eyes glittered and her nostrils dilated, her bosom rose and fell. Then she slowly pointed to a spot.

'What happened here,' she said, 'last night?'

CHAPTER XXVII.

A WRESTLE FOR THE MASTERY.

THERE was no answer. Mina covered her face with her hands. She had not expected the accusation to take this form, and for the moment its directness and comprehensiveness were overwhelming.

It was obviously no tell-tale tongue which had tattled into Penelope's ear; there were no mere surmises and suspicions on her cousin's part, which could by dexterous care be smoothed

away; but it was a plain, unvarnished fact with which the accused had now to deal—one which could not be glossed over, softened, or denied. She shook mutely, ready for submission or rebellion, as occasion might offer.

‘Speak,’ said Penelope, at last. She was not deceived by the other’s attitude. ‘Speak. You have been silent long enough. The time for silence has gone by. Mina, if there be any honour left in you, any honesty, any truth, speak out now, and tell me the meaning of what I saw—of what *I saw*—take place here—on this spot—a few hours ago.’

No response; no movement.

‘It was a scene to blind my eyes,’ Penelope went on, her lips curling, and her head up-reared; ‘treachery, deceit, degradation; oh, you proud Carnousties, you fond parents, you poor, trustful, confiding master and mistress—*this* is how your own child and your base-born menial serve you! *This* is how they repay you! Speak, girl, can’t you?’ and she clutched and shook the other’s arm. ‘No need for so much confusion now; there can be but little shame left. Speak the truth. Was it for the first time you were——’ She ground her teeth, loathing the words she could not speak.

Still no audible reply; only a faint whimper.

Penelope paused. (‘Is this real, or is it only a blind?’ she was saying to herself.) ‘Mina, take down your hands; take them down, I say; don’t stand whining there, but strike one honest blow in your own defence. You must have *something* to say. No woman could do as you have done without making *some* excuse to herself. Stop that muttering,’ stamping her foot with a frown; ‘*speak out*—good heavens!—*speak out*; and let us have the whole truth at last.’

‘What have I to speak out about?’ said Mina, thus forced to find voice in spite of sullen reluctance. ‘You have said all there is to say, I suppose. Since you saw what you did I should not have thought you required to be told anything more.’

‘I require to be told how long this has been going on?’

‘Long before *you* came to the place; does that satisfy you?’

‘Before I came?’ Penelope was thunderstruck.

‘Yes, before you came.’

‘You have been carrying on this clandestine——’

‘There is no need to particularise. Yes; I say “Yes” to everything. There, that will do. Let me go. You will tell it

all to papa and mamma, of course, and you will think you have done a very Christian act, and Torquil Macalister will be driven with ignominy from the place ; and (I—' her face altered, her arms fell by her side, the last words died away in a faint despairing whisper)—' and I—what will become of me ? '

Penelope, who had opened her mouth to speak, closed it again.

At the same moment a loud joyous note rang through the woods, and both started at the sound.

It was Torquil, the shepherd, calling to his dogs, and in another moment a collie bounded into view, heralding the approach of his master.

It was now Mina Carnoustie's turn to seize her companion by the wrist. ' Don't let him see anything amiss ; don't, in Heaven's name,' she exclaimed in a vehement undertone. ' Penelope, you don't know, you can't think ; it would be too dreadful ; he has such a haughty spirit. If he were spoken to he might—dear Penelope—for once—for once—'

Penelope shook off the touch as though it were defilement. ' Do you think I would speak to that *reptile* ? ' she said.

When Torquil passed, swinging along as though he trod on air, and performed his usual deferential obeisance to the young ladies, gracefully as ever, she made the proper acknowledgment with even a shade more deliberation than usual, in order to mark the fullness of her contempt. Was it likely she would bandy words or even looks with a creature so unworthy ?

The break, however, was so far salutary, in that it enabled Penelope to overcome her first outbreak of passionate contempt, and to recall some of the gentler emotions of the night, whose echoes she had dimly caught in her cousin's ' What will become of me ? '

A heavy sigh burst from her lips.

Mina was still looking excited and alarmed. Yet it seemed as though with it all some of the blithe exultation of her lover had found its way into her bosom also, and as she looked after his retreating figure, Penelope guessed the meaning of her kindling eye. When all was said and done, Mina was still proud of her choice. Neither one nor the other of the treacherous pair must be driven to extremities.

With a strong effort, she mastered herself sufficiently to adopt a calmer tone.

' I have to clear myself,' she said, ' for it may appear to you that I have been playing the part of a spy—'

'Yes, you have,' eagerly. It was something to have such a counter charge to prefer.

'I have not. I supposed that you would think so; but I have not. Mina, don't you know that all these months in which I have been with you, all day and any hour of the day, these months during which you yourself confess that this miserable affair has been going on, I have never, no, not for a single moment, suspected it? There were many things about you that puzzled me; and I did not always like what I saw. I saw that you were deceitful and artful. You were continually asking me not to mention what you did and where you went. You were disturbed about trifles, and altogether peculiar and strange. But as for my ever dreaming you could be so false, so base——' She stopped, endeavouring to suppress the reproaches with which her lips were brimming.

'Go on,' said Mina stonily.

'I thought when I noticed how anxious Ailsie was about you, that she was afraid for your health; and after something of the kind had passed between us, it seemed to me that I had found out the cause of everything, and I was quite happy that day—sorry for you, but happy, because you were not to blame, if you were odd and unaccountable and not like other people.'

'That is what Ailsie thinks, is it?'

'It was what *she wished me* to think,' said Penelope with some hesitation. 'Perhaps it was not altogether what she thought herself. You know best about that. She quieted me for the time. Then there was your loss of the brooch. Why do you never wear that brooch? Why have I never seen nor heard of it since or before that day?'

Mina raised her head and unclasped her dress. 'Look here,' she said; the silver bauble gleamed within.

'It was his gift?' said Penelope, breathing quickly. 'I see. You sent *him* to look for it on the moor, when *I* was told you had lost a pencil-case?'

Mina smiled.

'No wonder he was angry when Mr. Redwood offered to be your escort to the spring, yesterday. It was he, Torquil Macalister, who was enigmatical then. He did not see me, but I heard him cursing in his own tongue, as he looked at you both. You had to soothe his "haughty spirit" afterwards, I presume?' ironically.

'You are right.' Mina was now the calmer of the two.

'And to grant him last night's meeting?'

‘Yes.’

‘For which you had again to lie to me. And now you think I followed you out, and tracked you to this spot, in order to discover your secret? Oh, how little did I suppose there was any such secret! By the merest accident I strolled this way, and, hearing voices, I imagined that some of your servants had stolen out to meet each other—it would have been no harm if they had—and as I did not want to surprise them and make them uncomfortable, and had no time to get out of the way, I hid myself behind those bushes,’ pointing to the spot, ‘and waited for the lovers to pass by. They did pass——’ She could not proceed.

‘It shocked you, did it, Penelope?’

‘Mina, how can you speak like that? How can you—how can you? To have so stooped—so degraded yourself——’

‘I do not admit that I have degraded myself. Penelope, you have told your story, will you listen to mine? It may not in your eyes excuse me—perhaps it hardly does in my own—but I think,’ she faltered, paused, then resumed more firmly, ‘I think it ought to make you pity me.’

‘I do pity you already. God knows I pity you, dear, *dearest* Mina.’ A quick turn of feeling. ‘Pity you? My very heart has been breaking with pity for you all night long—all through the night in which I never slept——’

‘Was *that* the cause of your looks this morning, Penelope?’ The idea seemed to strike home. ‘Were you grieving for *me*?’

‘Yes, indeed, dear cousin; broken-hearted for you. If I have been cruel now——’

‘Nay, you have not been cruel.’

‘It was because I was so wild with shame and grief and perplexity. I know not what to do, or whom to go to. Mina, why did you come and listen at Ailsie’s door? It was that which set me on fire. I scarcely knew what I was saying, or where I was going. I——’ She sobbed aloud.

‘I suspected you had heard something, and were about to communicate it to Ailsie, and I wished to prevent your doing anything of the kind,’ said Mina, in a matter of fact tone. ‘I did not mean to come in, unless I were required.’

‘And you heard—what did you hear?’

‘I did not hear much; you came out too quickly.’

‘Mina, how could you?’

‘It was necessary. I have had to defend myself for a long time now. You said you would listen to my story, and I will not

be long; and, Penelope, try to believe that for once—for once—I am telling you the truth. Penelope, you know us now as a family; you have lived among us long enough to be no stranger. You see the warped, cramped, stunted creatures we are in mind and soul; we daughters of a fine old race; we descendants of noble wives and mothers; of wise and good women, who would have shuddered to see us what we are. Do you know that we might not always have been so? That there was a time when each one of us was a bright and happy child, free of tongue and heart, ready for anything, eager for everything; longing, above all, to know and see and learn the stuff the world is made of. Then our parents took us in hand, and the slow rigid process began by which every natural growth was stopped, and every natural instinct crushed. We were to be not what God made us, but what mamma wanted us. We were never granted a reason, or an explanation. "It is enough that I wish it," was the formula which closed every controversy. We were not to read, except it were the weak, childish literature she provided, and that when we were women grown; newspapers were put out of our reach; what people were thinking and doing in the world was carefully kept from us, except when it jumped with our parents' own inclinations and opinions. Even then it was dealt out to us grudgingly. We were not to discuss the subjects of the day. Our religion was to be the religion mamma dispensed. We were punished if we did not welcome it and receive it in every particular. We were allowed no friendships, for mamma thought it was a bad thing for girls to get together and talk. Even you, Penelope, when you came—and even now when we are crushed and shapen, and have taken the form designed for us, and have no life left in us—even now, we were warned, or I was, not to be contaminated by your worldly wisdom and knowledge. This has been our education; it only needed the finishing touch,' she paused, 'and that came to me—six years ago. Can you guess what it was?'

'I know.' Penelope bent her head. She had been expecting this.

'You know? They told you. Oh yes, their own version, doubtless. You see, by this time, my poor sisters have lost as it were their identity, and they who were once the persecuted are in turn the persecutors. They watch me now, as they were watched before. They are resolute to make me what they have been made. I do not blame them. I blamed them once, but that is long past; only it might help you to understand, if I—shall I explain?'

Penelope pressed her hand.

'We were staying away from home on one of our rare visits,' continued her cousin. 'I had barely left the school-room, and all the world was bright before me. I thought everyone I met kind, and good, and pleasant. Mamma was not so stern with me as she had been with Louisa and Joanna, and though, perhaps, I was not always *quite* open with her, I did not on the whole abuse her confidence. But we never ran to our mother with our secrets, our outcries, our wants and demands, as other children do. Even now when mamma talks with the elder ones, and thinks she has raised them to their proper level, it is she who originates every idea and opinion, and they are there merely to echo and applaud. You will see, then, that I was not likely to confide either to her or to them that I—that a new world had opened before me. Mr. Etheridge was handsome, clever, good. He talked to me as no one had ever talked before, and in a few days I had learned to feel that I could be happy with him—at least that I *was* happy, and that I had never been the same with anyone else. Penelope, it all fell away like that mist upon the ocean. There was no explanation—at least I never had any. He came here—he had told me he would come, and asked my leave to do so, in a way that could have borne but one interpretation, and when he came, I——'

She stopped.

'Yes—you?'

'I was not allowed to see him. I was forced to remain in my room upstairs, and he was given to understand that he was to return no more.'

'And you have never met each other since?'

'Never.'

He must have been a very weak man,' said Penelope, with some asperity, 'to be put off so easily. Mina, he could not have been in earnest; at least, he could have had no strength of purpose—no tenacity.'

'Perhaps not. I do not know. But, you see, we cannot tell in what light my absence was placed before him, I have often wondered—conjured up the scene—heard papa's and mamma's voices giving the easy explanation; and the more I have thought of it, the more certain I am that they must have been resolute to represent me as voluntarily avoiding him, and desirous of making such avoidance marked. Their very silence on the point leads me to be sure of this. They evidently never anticipated his prosecuting his quest any further, and were well satisfied to have dis-

posed of him so easily. I never could summon courage to ask for the details; but by piecing together such scraps of information as I caught up, I gathered that Mr. Etheridge was to be forgotten, and that I was not even to be told why. Can you wonder, Penelope, that I vowed then and there that should there ever seem to be the dawning of any other love for me I would hide it in my own breast, and take my own course?’

She paused a few minutes, then resumed. ‘There never has been such till this spring. You know how it began. I nearly let you into the secret—at least, I felt as though I had—on the very first morning after your arrival. I was in danger, and Torquil saved me; saved me as no one else could have had either the strength or the courage to do. Instead of approaching from behind, which might have startled me—and I was standing on a frightfully perilous brink, you must remember—he climbed up the sheer face of the precipice, and placed himself between me and death. I broke down; I betrayed my feelings, my admiration—’

‘That will do,’ said Penelope, in a hard, dry voice.

‘You are angry again; but I ought to clear Torquil.’

‘I am not angry, but I am sickened and disgusted. If it had been anyone else—anyone in your own station—any man, however inferior in rank, who was ordinarily refined and educated—nay, I will even say, any man with common honesty and honour! But just see already how you have been worked upon to be a party to his treachery. He has abused the trust reposed in him as a servant—you as a daughter. Had it been a mere shock of betrayal, and had you instantly agreed to separate, and forget each other—but, Mina, you can calmly own to weeks and months of concealment, falsehood—’ Then suddenly, ‘You went to meet him that day you left me at the cottage in the glen!’

‘I did. He was waiting by the waterfall.’

‘You said you wished to see another sick man.’

‘Not “sick”—I did not say a “sick” man.’

‘Why not? You might have said it; it would have added nothing to the lie. You meant me to believe you were visiting another of your father’s cottages, where you could be of use, as at the one we were in.’

‘Yes. I meant you to believe that, Penelope.’

‘Well?’

‘I have told you all. Six years ago I made up my mind that I owed neither duty nor obedience to parents who could treat me

as mine had done; and when the struggle came, I did not see that I owed them—or anyone—truth, either. To blindfold you all was my only weapon; and I used it.'

'He also apparently.'

'His crime was nothing,' said Mina, her eyes flashing. 'You would say he forgot his duty? Pooh! What is his "duty?" Has he served my father any less faithfully—has he neglected his work—has he saved himself by night or by day, on the weary moor or soaking hill-top, because he has dared to raise his eyes to his master's daughter? What has my father to complain of? Did not the patriarch Jacob do the same? Did——'

'Don't talk folly,' said Penelope, sharply. Her tears had dried upon her cheeks. 'You, I commiserate, I pity, I forgive; but for this man—this treacherous, smooth-faced scoundrel, who can let your father's hand rest on his shoulder, and look him in the face, and know that he is doing that which would break his very heart in two—for him——'

'Hush!' said Mina, in a cold, clear tone. 'Hush! You must not speak like that, for—I love him.'

(To be continued.)

The Eye of the Grey Monk.

THE Englishman who wants to take a short holiday has become aware that there is no country near England which affords so much interest and variety in a small compass as Holland. There, in fact, both the lovers of art and of nature are amply gratified. No one will dispute the former; no one will deny that some of the greatest masterpieces of painting may be seen in the Dutch galleries, and that the interior of the houses and the aspect of the people are in some ways as picturesque now as they were in the days of Rembrand and Gerard Dou; but some may smile with derision at the idea that there are any beauties of nature in Holland. The English tourist usually associates Holland with skating and bulbs, and confines himself to visiting the two provinces of Holland proper. He sees nothing but meadows and canals, and not caring for nature with that enthusiasm which finds beauty of expression even in the plainest features, he thinks the country flat, monotonous, and ugly. The beautiful woods of Gelderland and Overijssel, with brooks of the purest water, their fields of corn where Millet might have painted his 'Angelus,' their hilly moors of purple heather, their old castles with broad moats where the brilliant hues of skies and trees and flower-beds are reflected, are all to him *terra incognita*. He knows Scheveningen as a fashionable bathing-place, but who ever visits, or has even heard of, that charming island off the North coast of Friesland, Schiermonnikoog? Yet those who are tired of the rush of life and the conventionalities of society, and who care to refresh their bodies and minds in the purest sea air, and in the midst of surroundings simple, genuine, and full of poetry, could not find a more attractive spot.

During the glorious summer of last year we made a plan to visit the island, and starting from Gelderland, where we were staying, we took the train for Groningen, whence steamers run

four times a week to Schiermonnikoog. It is well worth lingering a day or two at Groningen, for many centuries past the most important town of the Northern Provinces. It has a fine old Gothic Cathedral with beautiful chimes, and a University founded in 1614, which has now 500 students, 300 of whom study medicine. The extensive University library, from which any one with an introduction may borrow, is in a separate building, and preserves an interesting relic—a Bible with annotations of Erasmus, and marginal notes in the writing of Luther, to whom it belonged. ‘*Du bist ein Bube*’ is one of the milder utterances of the great Reformer. The many charitable institutions, most of them in curious old buildings, the pretty costumes of the orphans, especially those of the Green Orphanage, cannot fail to interest the stranger, and he may also visit the neighbourhood, which has some fine woods, and is studded with country houses and farms. The peasant proprietors of Groningen are very rich, but the agricultural depression has told here as elsewhere. The boat journey to Schiermonnikoog takes five hours, but can be reduced to one by travelling through Friesland overland as far as the last station, Oostmahorn. We preferred, however, the water-way, and found it very pleasant on the neat little steamer, where our party of four were almost the only passengers. The Reitdiep, through which we steamed, is a broad canal of considerable importance, winding through a fertile country, with fields and pastures on each side, and villages and farms scattered at rare intervals. The solitude of the water-banks was only broken by a number of herons and wild ducks; and the seagulls gave us warning when we approached the sea. The steamer passed through two locks. In the first, it descended to a lower level; in the second, at Zoutkamp, near the mouth of the Reitdiep, it was raised to the level of the sea, and when the gates opened we found ourselves steaming into the Lauwerzee, a bay formed by the North Sea. This was crossed in an hour to Oostmahorn on the Frisian coast, and in about another hour we reached our destination. The sea was as smooth as a mirror, and even in stormy weather it is never very rough in that sheltered part. The arrival on the island is somewhat peculiar, for we actually landed in a carriage which came to meet us in the sea, the water being too shallow for any vessel to land. The harbour, the Wiel, which once existed south of the island, became filled with sand at the end of the last century, much to the detriment of the navigation and to the inconvenience of travellers.

We had a long drive over the bleak sands, left bare when the

tide is out, then crossed the dyke which protects that part of the island, and came upon a charming village ensconced in the dunes, and planted with *trées*, green hedges, and gardens. Beyond this we soon reached the Bath Hotel, which stands on a dune facing the North Sea. It is a large building, with airy rooms and verandahs, adapted entirely for the summer, and with simple but good arrangements. It has existed some six years, and is chiefly frequented by families from Groningen and Friesland, being but little known as yet even throughout Holland. The season had been excellent, but short; it does not begin till June 15, though the hotel is ready for visitors from the 1st. The Groningers had hastened homewards early to celebrate the anniversary of the siege by Prince Maurice, which delivered them from the yoke of the Spaniards, an event which they commemorate every year. Foreigners sometimes smile at the way Dutch people go on celebrating historical events which occurred several centuries ago, and there is no denying that the yearly commemoration of a siege in the year 1594 may become somewhat monotonous, but it keeps the memory of these events ever fresh among the young generation better than any history lesson learnt at school. Unlike the old lady who did not care for history because 'she thought by-gones had better be by-gones,' Dutch children, with these constant appeals to their imaginations, learn to look upon the past as part of the present, and to feel that they are bound to make themselves worthy of the hero race to whom they owe their liberties.

Only one Dutch family and the doctor were left in the hotel on our arrival, September 11. The doctor had seen many countries and known many men, and proved an agreeable companion, none the less so because he took a philosophic view of things and had a great distrust of all medical theories. Doctors have but little to do in the island, which is extremely healthy. The air is remarkably pure and full of ozone, and contagious illnesses are unknown. The people, however, though they reach a good old age, do not look very robust. Some attribute this to their constant intermarrying, but in the island of Urk, where the same thing takes place, among a much smaller population, the people are the most stalwart race of all the Netherlands. The doctor thought the want of vigour was due to the spare use that is made of animal food. Be this as it may, the stranger who comes imbibes health with every breath, and it is extraordinary to see the change after a few days in the weak and the anæmic.

The sands are splendid, and the moment the tide goes out are hard enough for carriage or bicycle. The absence of human beings was amply compensated for by innumerable birds rocking on the waves, diving for their food, or running or flying over the sands—seagulls of several kinds, plovers, divers, and those amusing little birds, the sand-pipers, which run to look for their food in the approaching wave, and, not being able to swim, retreat before it at a great pace. At low tide we could distinguish seals basking in the sunshine on the sand-bank in front of us. Large Hamburg steamers crossed the distant horizon, and once a Dutch gun-boat appeared in sight, to protect, it was said, Dutch fishermen from having their nets cut by the English. It was exhilarating to feel there was nothing between ourselves and the North Pole. There was a peculiar fascination about the evenings, when the sun had set in all its glory over the sea, and the deep blue sky above melted towards the horizon into soft transparent hues of yellow and red, a single star appearing here and there. Towards the north-east might be discerned the lighthouse of the island of Borkum, which is invisible in the daytime, westwards the revolving light of Ameland, while two lighthouses on our own island guided the distant seafarer on his way. Between Schiermonnikoog and Borkum there is the small island of Rottummeroog, inhabited by a single family.

Schiermonnikoog was no doubt originally part of the mainland of the province of Groningen, from which it is separated by water so shallow that one might almost cross on foot at low tide. It belongs to Friesland, and the inhabitants are of Frisian origin. They speak a Frisian dialect, but it is so different from that spoken in Friesland proper that they and the Frisians of the mainland can scarcely understand each other. The islanders all speak remarkably pure and correct Dutch, which they have learnt at school. The name of the island, Schiermonnikoog (Eye of the Grey Monk), is derived from the Grey Monks, so called from the colour of their dress. They belonged to the order of the Cistercians, and had once large possessions in the north of Friesland, and in places which have since been submerged by the sea, but which are still remembered, such as the sandbank called 'The Abbot,' near the island of Terschelling, where Abbot Gerardus of Lidlum had his pleasure-ground. The monks had a chapel on the island, which was converted into a parochial church in 1465. Their memory is preserved in the arms of the community—a bare-footed monk on a field of argent, holding a rosary in the right

hand and pointing to heaven with the other. In 1580 the island was secularised and transferred to the States of Friesland, and these sold it fifty years later, when they were in need of money, for 18,151 florins to Johan Stachouwer, with all the seignorial rights of the sea, taxation, and civil and criminal jurisdiction, merely reserving to themselves the right of sovereignty and requiring the oath of allegiance. The new lords of the island had themselves represented by a 'drossaert' or bailiff, assisted by four burgomasters, who were elected by the inhabitants. Their rule was not an unmixed benefit. Stories are told of injustices and cruelties against which the islanders sometimes rebelled, so that the landlords had to ask the States of Friesland for protection. It often happened that several heirs possessed the island together, and that women were in power. Thus Maria Catharina Stachouwer shared the property with her brother and afterwards with her nephew. She ruled in the last century for a number of years, and exercised her rights in such an arbitrary manner that the people repeatedly appealed to the States of Friesland, who had to give judgment, and who made an attempt to resume the jurisdiction. The strong-minded lady protested against her rights being curtailed, and a long controversy ensued. It was argued on her behalf, in a document of the year 1738, that the distance of the island from the mainland would involve expense to the fishermen if the cases were tried elsewhere; that the population was small; that according to an old tradition the original inhabitants were Swedes, not Frisians; that the island had always been separate from Friesland; and last, not least, that the landlords had bought the right. After many lawsuits the dispute was finally settled in 1750 by a compromise. The lords of the island kept the jurisdiction subject to an appeal, in civil cases only, to the Court of Friesland. For over two hundred years the Stachouwers were in possession. In spite of many vicissitudes the island prospered, and in 1761, at the death of Maria Catharina, its value was rated at 88,800 florins. When at last the landlords wished to sell it, the islanders hoped that the States of Friesland would take back the ownership, but they were disappointed, and in 1859 it was sold to Mr. J. E. Banck, who, however, did not assume the seignorial rights. Last summer Mr. Banck put up the property for sale, and it was bought by the Hanoverian Count Berthold Bernstorff for his younger son. The new landlord was to come into possession in November. The islanders take the matter philosophically. If he is a good land-

lord they do not mind his being a foreigner, and, after all, they remain Dutch subjects.

In consequence of the wars between England and Holland, there had always been fears that the English would some day attack Schiermonnikoog, and a small body of soldiers was kept there to defend it. At the end of the last century, when all Europe was convulsed by the French Revolution, this fear was actually realised. On August 11, 1799, a few British ships, while cruising along the coast, came into collision with a Dutch brig, the *Crash*,¹ which made a brave but useless resistance. A Dutch gun-boat, which had retreated towards the island, was attacked on the 14th. Lieutenant Van Maaren, who commanded it, burnt his ship rather than surrender, and went with his men to the shore. The next day the English effected a landing and opened fire, but Lieutenant Broers, with twenty-six men, had chosen his position so well, and defended the village with so much bravery, that after two hours the English desisted. Meanwhile the people had been in the greatest anxiety. Some had buried their valuables, others had fled to the dunes, and it was an unutterable relief when they found that the British force had disappeared from the shores.

Another aspect of the history of the island is its incessant struggle with the elements. It is now four miles broad from north to south and twelve miles long, but there was a time when it was much larger. The sea made steady encroachments on the south and south-west side, and terrible storms and floods in the years 1717 and 1720 caused great destruction. The western dunes were partly washed away, and, the old village being now insufficiently protected, the inhabitants began to migrate to a more sheltered site, where the present village stands. The church had suffered so much from sand-drifts in 1715 that it had been pulled down and rebuilt farther inland, but here it only stood till 1760. In that year the people were obliged altogether to abandon the old village, which was then completely destroyed by the waves. The old manor house, Binnendyken, shared the same fate. A colporteur who visited the island a year after describes, in a naïve and simple way, what he heard from eye-witnesses of those terrible days. In 1737 there had been a great land-slip, he says, and in 1756 houses had been blown away

¹ The *Crash* had been formerly an English ship, and was now recaptured and taken home as a prize by Captain Boorder, who commanded His Majesty's sloop *l'Espirgle*.

and ships torn from their anchorage, but the day after Christmas 1760 the waves rose so high that they swept away the church and several houses. A few days before the people had carried the pews and pulpit out of the church, and the dead out of the graves, each family taking its own dead, for it was the custom to put the names on the coffins; the unclaimed coffins were washed into the sea, but recovered as far as possible and buried. The rich people, says this simple chronicler, who had been buried in the church were put under a shed till the new church was finished, and then they were buried in it. Some of the inhabitants remained in their houses till these had half tumbled down, and then they had to fly in the storm in mid-winter, and knew not whither. He was told that of late years nearly four miles of country had been washed away, and ships were sailing now where rabbits used to be caught in the dunes.

Even in the present village the inhabitants were not safe from the sea, which continued its incursions in this century till two events occurred to control them. Nature provided a remedy in an extensive sand-bank which gradually arose south-west of the island, in the very place where a dangerous current—the 'Noorman'—had threatened it; and in 1859 Mr. Banck, the late landlord, began the construction of a broad dyke 5,000 metres long, which meets the dunes east and west. A dyke made by the lords of the island at the end of the last century had been destroyed by the storms in 1825.

The island is now well protected on every side, and the period of storm and stress for the inhabitants is past. It is even increasing on the south-east side from considerable deposits made by the sea, and we saw grass growing where there had been sea not many years ago. Notwithstanding the greater security of the people, their prosperity has diminished from various causes, and the population has of late years dwindled from 1,000 to 700. There was a time when Schiermonnikoog subsisted on its fishing and shipping trade, and when the islanders owned more than a hundred ships. Unfortunately the fish disappeared from the shores, and the drying of plaice for exportation, which was then a great industry, came to an end, while the navigation suffered from the loss of the harbour 'de Wiel,' and from sailing vessels being superseded by steamers. All the men, however, still go to sea as their natural profession, and there is an excellent Naval School, at the head of which is a retired sea captain, Mr. Dyk. On leaving the elementary school the boys

go for a couple of years to sea, and then come home to study at the Naval School, while they have at the same time the opportunity of learning French and English at evening continuation classes.

The only industry now on the island is making mats of the grass which grows in the dunes, the marram (*Arundo arenaria*, L.), called in Dutch 'helm.' This grass has long tangled roots, which give firmness to the sand, and prevent it from drifting. The inhabitants are allowed to cut a certain quantity for their mats on condition that they plant an equivalent amount in places where it is wanted. These mats, which are sometimes the size of a small carpet, are found in most of the houses. They offer but a poor livelihood, for the grass has to go through a certain amount of preparation, and the wholesale price of the ordinary sized mat is not threepence; but the industry is most important for the island, as the large quantity of mat grass which is planted every year keeps the dunes in good condition, and checks the inroads of the sea. Among the rich flora on the island there is another grass of the same kind, the *Psamma baltica*, which has been found nowhere else in the Netherlands except on the island of Terschelling.

The village consists of three broad roads lined with houses, and planted with elms and lime trees. There is a large open space in the centre, where stand the church and the most important houses, such as the Council House, the Elementary School, the Naval School, the Parsonage, the Post Office, two inns, and several pretty villas. Near it is a small wood with seats, called the 'plantsoen,' or plantation. Most of the houses date from the middle of the last century, and are one storey high. They have each a little flower-garden in front, with a well of the purest water covered with painted wooden boards, and a kitchen-garden at the back; some are covered with ivy. All the inhabitants look well to do, and only three receive poor relief. There is a peculiarly refined look about the women, and some are remarkably handsome. They wear no special costume, but are fond of gay colours. They love dance and song, and on Sunday evenings during the season dancing goes on at the Pavilion close to the hotel. There is only one policeman on the island, and crime, theft, and immorality are almost unknown. The people are all Protestants of the Dutch Reformed Church. Since the last clergyman (who held his appointment from the year 1828) retired, no clergyman has resided on the island, but every Sunday one comes in the post ship from Friesland to preach in the afternoon,

having preached to his own congregation in the morning. All the people in the village own their houses, only paying a small ground rent. In summer they are glad to let a room or two to the visitors. Some of these rooms are entirely lined with old tiles, and probably unchanged for the last hundred years, but as neat as if they had been done up yesterday. Most of the principal houses belong to retired sea captains. The manor house, Rysbergen, which dates from 1757, stands east of the village, and has still a room with a handsome old chimney-piece and carving; but the family portraits which adorned the hall are gone, and a large room which was once hung with Cordova leather was converted into a warehouse for stranded goods. The house is now utilised for the country holidays of Leeuwarden children, and a better use was probably never made of it.

There are four farms which also belong to the landlord, who, moreover, owns the grazing land. We went to see the largest of these farms, which pays a rental of about 140*l.* a year, and was tenanted by a Frisian couple from the mainland, who kept some sixty head of cattle and made cheese and butter. They complained much of the bad times, and of having a third less food for their cattle than other years on account of the drought.

The Frisian language is full of English words. One of our party remarked in English, 'There is the churn.' The woman responded, '*Ja, daar is de churn*' (*karn* in Dutch). The proverb says, 'Bread, butter, and cheese are good English and good Frise.' Another farmer keeps a large duck-pond with decoy ducks, which inveigle the wild ducks into it; but this is not shown, for fear the ducks should understand the situation and escape.

In winter all communication with the mainland except through the telephone is sometimes cut off by the ice. On one occasion, a couple of years ago, when this lasted three weeks there was a dearth of mineral oil, and the inhabitants had to go to roost at eight o'clock. There were formerly a great many superstitions on the island. The people believed in witchcraft, and in spirits inhabiting the dunes, and second-sight apparitions were not infrequent. Women saw their husbands rise out of the sea with dripping hair—a sign that they were perishing in the waves, which but too often happened. Sometimes, however, the omens must have been misleading, for on one occasion a husband reappeared in the flesh long after he was thought to be dead, and found that his wife had married again. Whether he behaved with the same discretion as Enoch Arden the story does not say. A curious

custom still lingers. On the eve of Whit Sunday, which is the first day of the fair, a maypole is put up in the village in front of one of the inns. A green branch is fastened to the top, and on this is hung a basket in which is put a live cock, with food enough for three days—the duration of the fair. This is called the ‘Kallemmooi.’ At the end of the time the maypole is taken down and the cock restored to its owner. No one on the island seems to know the origin or meaning of this custom. The connection, however, with similar usages in other countries is plain. This is not the place to enter in detail into their history. Mannhardt and Frazer¹ have shown that they go back to the time when man ascribed to nature a living soul which had some affinity with his own, and which had the power to confer benefits or inflict injuries on mankind, and had to be reckoned with and conciliated. The maypole represented the newly-awakened spirit of vegetation, brought in to shower its blessings on the village. Logically this had to be a fresh tree every year, when, after the death of winter, nature revived; but from reasons of economy, or perhaps when the meaning of the custom was forgotten, the same tree was used, and a green branch was put at the top as a simulacrum. The spirit of vegetation sometimes took both the animal and vegetable forms side by side, and in some countries the corn spirit² was personified by the cock, which was supposed to sit in the last sheaf; and when this had been cut, a cock, or the image of one, was fastened to the top of a may-tree. Thus we see the ancient superstition emphasised in the island custom, though the people would, no doubt, be extremely surprised to hear it.

The inhabitants are strongly attached to their island. They call themselves neither Frisians nor Dutch, but Schiermonnikoogers. One of the late Burgomasters, who held his appointment forty years and died last winter at Davos, was brought back at his own request to be buried under the trees which he had planted. The sea-captain, after having spent his life on the seas, is glad to end his days in his own island. There he recounts his adventures on the winter evenings when the storm is howling outside; there he can still follow in all her moods the sea he loved so well, and looking towards the distant horizon dream of the lands which he visited beyond; and there, when his appointed hour has come, the sound of the waves lulls him to his last sleep.

¹ Mannhardt's *Wald- und Feldkulte*, and Frazer's *Golden Bough*.

² Mannhardt identifies the Baumgeist and Korngeist: ‘Sie sind besondere Manifestationen der Vorstellung “Vegetationsdämon.”’—*Baumkultus*, p. 614.

The constant communication with foreign lands has a peculiarly civilising influence; the men have all seen the world, and the women have at least heard of it. We went into a modest cottage built in the dunes by a sailor with his own tools some seventeen years ago. Prints of Etna which he had brought back adorned the walls, lacquered objects from Java sent home by the son were scattered about, and there was a refinement about the place far above what one usually meets with in that station of life.

At the end of a week spent in exploring the island, we found ourselves the last visitors in the hotel, and preparations were made for closing it. 'Faute de combattants le combat finit.' There was nothing left but to tear ourselves away from this charming and peaceful spot. The steamers had ceased running, so one morning early we took the post sailing-ship to Oostmahorn. Our only fellow-traveller was a sea-captain who had taken Mr. Stanley over part of the Congo, had traded in ivory with Tippoo Tib, and was now on his way back to Africa. The sails were unfurled, and in spite of a south-westerly breeze we were borne in an hour and a half to the coast of Friesland, whence we pursued our journey to Leeuwarden.

ELISABETH LECKY.

Mortmain.

'LET the dead past,' who hath said,
 'Bury its dead?'
 The past is present with us still
 For well or ill;
 And still, and still will memories,
 Like ghosts, arise,
 Of far-off hours with rapture fain
 Or scarred with pain:
 Familiar footsteps on the floor
 Sound as of yore,
 The door-hinge turns, and lo! there stands,
 With outstretched hands,
 One who, it seems, just now had left
 You unbereft,
 And close you clasp in your embrace
 A mother's face,
 — With that dear gaze of yearning care,
 Half love, half prayer—
 Or sister's, or, as once she smiled,
 A little child
 Who, after, glorified your life
 As worshipped wife:
 Till poor seems all that's left of bliss
 By what you miss.
 Or darker visions of the night
 Your soul affright,
 And 'Take, O God,' your pale lips pray,
 Those eyes away,
 Those stern eyes, with the dreadful stare
 Of fierce despair.'
 You wronged that man, you stole his fame,
 You smirched his name,

Took all he gave, then passed him by,
Or let him lie
—Poor Lazarus—while at your doors
Dogs licked his sores.
Or else, yourself, with sad self-scorn,
You see re-born,
And shrink, beholding in a son
Deeds you have done ;
In vain you dreamt long years would cleanse
Your old offence,
And how upbraid him, when the mud
Was in his blood ?
Your reckless rage, your sullen mood,
Your will that stood
Infirm, and straight to pleasure's charms
Laid down its arms,
You own in him, with doubled force
Of old remorse.
Ah, who shall say what agonies
And stifled cries
Are his, who, struggling with his past,
Has learnt at last
The strife is vain, and he cannot
Relax one jot
The serpent-coils, still tightening,
That round him cling !
If haply he could right old wrongs,
Perchance he longs
To publish in the market-place
His hid disgrace,
And stand forth by some Hester Prynne,
With all her sin,
(Made his) emblazoned on her breast,
Scarlet, confessed :
But shame were not atonement—nay,
’T were worse that way,
And should the sower own the seed
’T would spread the weed :
He can but bear as best he can
His own soul’s ban,
And like a bird of shattered plume
Abide his doom.

Whatever snow-bright wonderland
His eyes once scanned,
With radiant confidence to climb
Its peaks sublime,
He sees no more, no more may wrest
From life its best,
But slow steps on the sands must set
Of vain regret,
And grope for polestar, grown for him
Fitful and dim.
What's left him then?—This, not to be
A Pharisee,
And not forget sloughed sins, as might
The hypocrite,
To cast no stone, to swell no cry
Of 'Crucify;'
And should men in his praises speak
Of strength (how weak !)
To hug the vulture at his breast
As welcome guest.
It may be he shall never feel
Will fused to steel,
Nor ever, all a lifetime through,
Faults done undo,
Nor ever know a heart so sure
And self-secure,
That, should temptation, twentyfold
Its strength of old,
Assail him, yet would guard its gate
Inviolable.
But ev'n as seven years mould afresh
A man's whole flesh,
The coward soul may bold become
For martyrdom,
The sordid soar, the fraudulent prize
Truth more than lies:
So, though the past be unforgot
And buried not,
The wider wave of aftertime
May purge its slime,
And,—so men strive—howe'er they fall,
There's hope for all.

A. H. BEESLY.

Reminiscences of Indian Saurians.

FORTY boiled alligators! A story has been recently in circulation in the English newspapers telling how some forty young alligators that had been placed in an empty boiler for safe keeping were done to death like so many lobsters, water having been turned on into the boiler, and a fire lighted to heat the water. It seems to be rather a curious moral perversion that no one appears to think very much about the hundreds and thousands of live lobsters and other crustacea that meet their fate in this manner, to prepare them for consumption as human food; but when the story is told of a small parcel of young imported alligators, sympathy is expressed for their fate. I do not approve of this method of killing young alligators, any more than I can like it in the case of lobsters; but my acquaintance with the alligator, young and old, in his native country, both wild and in captivity, does not lead me to feel much sympathy for him, even though his end came about in seemingly a cruel manner. The alligator itself is a cruel beast. It is by no means an easy thing to kill him outright, and, at all events, boiling water provided a certain and speedy death for him. It may be said that there was no use for a boiled alligator. That is really a matter of prejudice. There is reason to believe that the flesh of a young boiled alligator is barely distinguishable from veal. It is probably cleaner and more tender than much of the meat of the animals that are usually consumed as food on the Continent or in the East End of London. I have never desired to taste the flesh of alligators, cooked or uncooked. But in India I have seen the Sontals and other caste-less natives greedily devour the flesh of an alligator, without waiting to cook it. The flesh was very pale in colour, and probably was much superior to the flesh of snakes and rats and such-like creatures which form the ordinary food of the predatory Sontal when hunting in his native woods. It does not fall to his lot very often to be able to circumvent and slay

and eat a large alligator. He more frequently comes upon small alligators, and they go to swell the contents of his cooking pots. If, however, he is so lucky as to meet a sahib who has shot a large alligator, say about six feet long, he eagerly falls upon the unwonted delicacy, without waiting to cook it; very much as we read in books of African adventure, that the natives devour the carcasses of the large game animals that the English sportsmen do not want for their own followers.

In writing about some of my personal experiences with alligators, it is necessary to observe that they were limited to India, and chiefly to that part of India which is known as Eastern Bengal. I must also apologise for writing of alligators when I ought to call them crocodiles. For although there seems to be virtually much the same difference between the crocodile and the alligator as there is between an attorney and a solicitor, somehow we usually speak of a solicitor, and in the same way we prefer the use of the name alligator to that of crocodile. It is common knowledge that scientifically the alligator is a beast belonging almost exclusively to the New World. The crocodile belongs to the Old World, the *orbis veteribus notus*, as our old Eton Atlas had it, to the exclusion, as it happens, of those portions of South Africa where crocodiles much abound. The ancients had heard of the crocodiles of the Nile, and were incredulous about them because it was the fashion to mistrust what Herodotus had honestly told of them. The crocodiles of Central and South Africa have been introduced to the British public by Sir Samuel Baker and other great sportsmen, on whose province it is not my intention to trespass. The crocodiles of Eastern Bengal are sufficiently numerous to give scope for the pens of many writers much more able than myself, if they had had the same amount of experience that fell to my lot.

The first wild alligator that I remember to have seen was at the old fort of Budge-Budge near Calcutta, which fort, history tells us, was taken from the Mogul enemy by a half-drunk English sailor who swam ashore from his ship that was anchored off the fort. Some of the ruined ramparts of the fort are still visible—and there is a fine old tank, from which the earth for the ramparts was dug, which has undergone little change in the last hundred years. When I was in college in Calcutta, studying languages, I used to go and visit a friend who owned the old Government House at Budge-Budge, for the sake of snipe-shooting in the adjacent rice-fields. There were usually two or three of us there at a time,

and when we arose in the morning, and when we returned from shooting, very hot and very dirty, it was our pleasure to go to the tank in the fort and have a swim in its clear cold water. We had bathed there several times, when one day a native came and called to us to be careful, as there was a large alligator in the tank, which was watching us. Being novices in India, we hardly understood what he meant, but we heard the word 'kumbhir,' which is the Bengali for an alligator. We got out of the water with much agility, and whistled to the little dog Jerry, a Scotch terrier, who was enjoying himself with a swim. But it was too late. There was one yelp of horror and despair as a huge pair of jaws closed over poor Jerry, and carried him to the bottom of the tank. We rushed into the house for our guns, but it was of no use. When we came back with our guns, there was the bright unruffled surface of the water, but no sign of the poor dog and the alligator, and though we fired several shots, nothing stirred. One of the natives who had stayed by the tank when we ran into the house, said that after about a minute the alligator's head appeared above water with the dog across his jaws. He suddenly pitched the dog's body into the air, so that it came down headforemost, and went right down the beast's throat, and this was the last that was seen of poor Jerry.

We did not believe the man's story at the time, but some years afterwards it happened to me to be able to verify it on more than one occasion. The Rajah of Burdwan had a large menagerie, and he had a collection of large alligators, which were kept in tanks surrounded by high walls with a sort of rampart, from which the visitor could look down upon the movements of the alligators, either in the water or in the grass along the sides of the tank. It was the custom of the Rajah's menagerie-keeper to feed these alligators occasionally with a live duck. Their usual food consisted of lumps of coarse fish; but when no fish was procurable, a live duck, or a village pig, or a pariah puppy, would be brought and thrown into the tank, where the head of an alligator was just visible amongst the green slime. When the duck touched the water, the alligator's head disappeared from the surface. The duck, enjoying its liberty, would begin to flap its wings and clean its feathers, when suddenly a huge pair of jaws appeared and the duck was carried below. After about a minute the alligator's head would be raised out of the water, with the unfortunate duck across its jaws. There was a violent toss of the head, and the duck was sent up into the air, falling again headforemost into the alligator's jaws, and being lost to sight for ever. This was done on several occa-

sions in my presence; and a large alligator would probably adopt the same course with a small dog, a young pig, or any such trifling morsel. With a human being as its victim the alligator proceeds differently. Having seized a man by the arm or the leg, the alligator at once dives down to the bottom of its favourite pool in the deepest water, and there it lies upon the body till life is extinct, and for several hours or days until corruption has set in. What happens when the body is fit to be eaten in the alligator's judgment, it is not given to man to witness. It is only when the body is recovered and the alligator driven off, that we come to a knowledge of its previous treatment.

Perhaps I may here tell the old story of the pig which was saved from the jaws of the alligators in the Burdwan Rajah's tanks by the rhinoceros which dwelt in the same enclosure as the alligators. Poor little piggy was tossed into the tank to feed the alligators, but happening to fall near the sloping side, by which the rhinoceros went down to its ablutions in the tank, he scrambled out, and took refuge between the legs of the rhinoceros. An alligator crawled out of the tank in hot pursuit of piggy, but when he came to the rhinoceros, it lowered its head and stopped him. The alligator retired discomfited. Piggy seems to have grasped the situation, and ever afterwards kept close to the rhinoceros, and when I saw him, on a casual visit to Burdwan, he was almost a year old. I sent the story to my cousin Frank Buckland, who published it in one of his popular books on natural history. I regret to say that, after all, piggy fulfilled his destiny; for according to native superstitions, he must have been born to be eaten by an alligator. Growing over-confident, he one day wandered along the edge of the tank, without seeing that an alligator was lying in the grass sunning itself. With a sweep of its huge tail the alligator knocked piggy into the water, and following him, quietly seized and dragged him to the bottom of the tank, and piggy was never seen again.

An alligator uses its long and powerful tail—or rather the tail end of its long body—as its chief weapon of aggression. When an alligator has crept noiselessly under water to the spot where a man is standing bathing, there is a sudden sweep of the tail, and the man is knocked down into the water, where the alligator seizes him in its mouth, and carries him down to the bottom in deep water. When a pony or a small cow is drinking at the side of a river, the alligator pursues the same tactics if the slope of ground permits it; and having first knocked its prey into the

water, seizes it in its mouth, and then drowns and kills it as it pleases. It is seldom that the affrighted animal escapes, for it is half-drowned before it can think of resistance. I have heard a story told by a native of Bengal, who alleged that he saw a full-grown tiger seized by a large alligator, and dragged into the river and drowned. I did not believe the story for several reasons; one reason being that if there had been a tiger and a large alligator in conflict on the bank of the river, where the tiger was seized by the foot, the native who beheld it would not have remained to watch the result, but would have sought safety at the distance of at least a mile. There was, however, a very good picture exhibited in England not long ago, of a leopard being seized by an alligator. The leopard was lying under a bush by the river side, with one of its paws in the water. The alligator stole quietly up, and got that paw in his mouth and began to pull at its prey. The leopard's look of rage and anguish were well expressed in the picture. The leopard is not a large animal, but only a large alligator would have had the audacity to attack such a beast. I apprehend that if the occurrence as shown in the picture is true, the leopard did not rejoin his family circle that evening, if the alligator succeeded in dragging it into the water.

I must now go back a long way to the time, more than forty years ago, when my wrath against alligators was aroused by the sad fate of my friend S.'s little dog Jerry, at Budge-Budge, and I vowed eternal enmity to the race. I was ordered to go from Calcutta to Chittagong, and as there were no railways or steamers in those days, I had to go in a house-boat, much like the Egyptian dahabieh, my route lying across the Delta of Bengal, and through those dreary and inhospitable regions known as the Sunderbuns. I must, however, admit that some parts of the Sunderbuns are very beautiful, and on the third day after leaving Calcutta I found myself rowing along a river about half a mile wide, with a fine belt of forest trees on either bank. There was not another boat, or another human being to be seen, and we rowed along at great pace, taking advantage of a favourable tide. Suddenly one of the boatmen called my attention to the head of a large alligator that was just visible on the surface. The animal seemed to be inquisitive, and to want to know who was invading its domains. It is not an unusual thing for an alligator to seize a boatman who is rowing with his foot outside the boat, or performing his ablutions on the little platform at the stern provided for that purpose. So the alligator came boldly on, and I had time to

go into the cabin and get my gun, and load it with a bullet. I got a fair shot at the alligator's head, and as the beast made a great commotion in the water, I readily believed my boatmen when they said that I had hit it. Not knowing much about alligators then, and believing that I had hit this one in the head, I expected to be able to secure its body. But I was much mistaken. I may have given it a mortal wound, but the alligator had no idea of giving itself up for a single bullet, and it disappeared, and I saw it no more. The boatmen said next day that they had seen the body float by, as we were at anchor for the night. But what will not a boatman say with a view to *baksheesh*?

An alligator's tenacity of life is remarkable. I have no doubt that when its brain is pierced by a bullet the animal does not long survive, but it sinks into deep water, where it cannot be seen. I never succeeded in killing and bagging an alligator by a shot in the brain. The structure of the skull provides much protection to the brain, and a bullet might easily be deflected by the hard bones. It was not my vocation to go about killing alligators, but on one occasion I was witness to the great difficulty of taking the animal's life. We were on a shooting party near the Pointee indigo factory on the Ganges, and one day when we returned from our morning's round in the jungles, after deer and always a possible tiger or a wolf, we found that some fishermen had brought in an alligator about six feet long, securely bound on a bullock-cart. The animal was still alive, but had evidently been severely beaten to make him quiet on the bullock-cart, so the order was given to tie a stout rope round its loins, and to turn it into a small tank to refresh and recover itself, whilst we were taking our baths and our breakfast. Breakfast over, the alligator was hauled out of the tank, and was quite lively, so that it had to be fastened to a tree. Then operations for killing it began, but bullets from a small rifle or an ordinary 12-bore gun seemed only to irritate it. A Sontal brought a large spear, one of the *lato venabula ferro* which they use, and drove it down the alligator's throat into its vitals, and this had more effect, whilst another man got an axe and chopped away at the neck till the head was separated from the body. The body was then cut open, and the heart was lying on the ground by its side, but still the tail continued to move. But here we withdrew, and the mob of Sontals who had been eagerly waiting rushed in with their knives, and cut up the body and ate everything eatable, so that in a short time there was nothing left but the skin and bones. Whilst writing this I have come across

Major Hopkins's 'Fishing Experiences,'¹ a bright little book, well got up, and with some pretty pictures. Major Hopkins tells how he caught a murderous alligator in Ceylon, and put it to death with much difficulty, many shots having been fired with little effect till some one fired down its throat and sickened it. His old hunter then attacked it with an axe to sever the head from the body, but was nearly knocked out of time by a sweep of the alligator's tail. At length the animal was slain. Major Hopkins writes that his alligator measured from fifteen to twenty feet, which is a large size, and a twenty-foot alligator is rather a rare bird. There is much difference between fifteen feet and twenty feet in an animal like an alligator.

I had not forgotten my vow of eternal enmity to alligators, and so it came to pass that in the year 1846-47, when I had temporarily become magistrate of the Chittagong district, I took the opportunity of endeavouring to promote their destruction. The magistrate was then the head of the district police, who were ill-paid and untrained and very incapable. The head of each local division of police was styled a darogah, which was said to be a title derived from two Persian words signifying a teller of lies. But that is another matter. When the darogahs received a written order from the magistrate telling them to exterminate alligators, they rather rejoiced at the new opportunity and opening for plundering somebody. They replied at once in terms of Oriental hyperbole, expressing their detestation of alligators and their intention of destroying them. They had therefore sent for the principal fishermen, and ordered them to catch all the alligators in the country, and they would send a further report in a short time. This really meant that they had sent for some unfortunate fishermen and extorted money or fish from them. There was only one darogah who went further. He sent in an elaborate report, to the effect that he had hired a large boat, and got a large hook, which he had baited with a live goat, and that he had caught a huge alligator, which was dragging the boat all about the river, and frightening the people with its roaring, so that he begged that the sahib would come out to shoot it. I at once prepared to ride out a distance of about twenty miles, and sent word to the darogah that I was coming. I had hardly ridden a few miles when I was met by another messenger, to say that the alligator had broken loose, and that it would be no good for me to come. So I was disappointed; but it afterwards came to my

¹ London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1893.

knowledge that the whole story was a pure fiction, invented by the darogah, who thought that it would show his zeal and please the magistrate, and that no one would be so foolish as to ride out twenty miles to shoot an alligator. A somewhat analogous occurrence took place at Chittagong nearly twenty years afterwards, when I was Commissioner of Chittagong. The police inspector (no longer darogah) sent in a report to the superintendent of police that three tigers had come down from the main forest, and taken up a position in some detached jungle-covered hills, where they might easily be found and shot. So the superintendent of police and I and the collector sent out guns and elephants and tents, and rode about thirty miles to the police station. Great was our disgust when on our arrival the police inspector came out to greet us, and with exquisite flattery informed us that the tigers, having heard the news of our lordships' coming, had all run away. I have seen a story like this told elsewhere, though I cannot find it. I can only say that it occurred to me and my friend the late Mr. J. D. Ward, and General John Graham, who was then a major and district superintendent of police, about 1862-63.

There is a native proverb (the original is in Sanskrit poetry), that he who bathes in the river should first make friends with the alligator. It is to be regretted that no directions are given with the proverb for making friends with the alligator. The Hindoo community is very much given to bathing in rivers and in tanks—and it is a curious fact that the Mahomedans, living alongside of them, are much less addicted to bathing. Perhaps a Hindoo might conciliate the alligator by pushing a Mahomedan into the water, but it is not the practice to do so at present. The natives bathe in tanks and in rivers. Almost every house has what we might call a water-hole belonging to it, out of which the earthen foundation of the house was dug. To this water-hole the members of the house have exclusive resort. It is usually covered with green scum and weeds and is very foul, but the natives don't mind that. Even this water-hole is not always sacred to the alligator who hides himself in it, and waits for his opportunity for carrying off some child of the household. But this is a very rare occurrence, as the alligator knows that his position in such narrow quarters is not safe. There is also in almost every village a large tank with good deep water and convenient ghauts or sloping steps for bathers. Here the people go for their daily bath and their daily gossip, and here there are almost always one or two small alligators. When the alligators are small, they are tolerated, and little heed is paid to them, but one day a large beast has found its way to

the tank, and tries to carry off one of the bathers. Then there is a great commotion, and sometimes a rescue of the victim is not possible. But it is at the river bathing-places that the alligator finds the most convenient field for his ravages. Almost every Indian river is deemed sacred, and some spiritual benefit is supposed to be derived from bathing in it. In any large town or village there is usually a bathing-ghat with convenient flights of steps leading down to the water. Here the people assemble in great numbers. The women of the higher classes creep down before daylight, and hope to get back to their houses before they can be seen. The young women with their graceful figures, and their wet garments clinging closely to their bodies, would perhaps not mind a little delay, but they are hurried home by their elderly chaperones. Sometimes one of these poor creatures is carried off by the alligator who is ready to take the early worm, which tends to show that the worm was wrong in getting up so early. In the course of the morning the number of bathers increases, and they stand about enjoying their ablutions and oblivious of danger. All of a sudden, an alligator seizes one of them and drags him down, almost before a shriek of despair can be uttered. The other bathers flee; but there is no one to rescue the unfortunate victim of the day. Of course, some attempts are made to kill an alligator that haunts a bathing-ghat, but the fishermen have no guns, and the alligator easily breaks their nets. It may seem incredible, but at one of the bathing-places of the city of Cuttack, a large alligator was killed, and when it was cut open, the silver and gold and brass ornaments that the women wear, which were found in its belly, were enough to show that it must have carried off and killed upwards of thirty grown-up women. I have not got a note of the length of that alligator, but the head was kept by a gentleman whom I knew, and I often saw it. The head of an alligator is in the shape of a triangle, and the base of the triangle in this alligator was thirty-eight inches on the bone, so that when covered with skin and flesh and muscle, it must have looked larger. Imagine the power of this monster when it opened its horrid jaws. I believe that in the Natural History Museum at Kensington equally large heads may be seen, and it is well worth a journey to go and see them.

I have seen my friend, Mr. T. R., when he was magistrate of Rungpore, jump into a tank where he knew that there were two alligators. And another friend of mine, Mr. L., most rashly jumped one night from the roof of a house-boat into the river

Luckia, although there were several large alligators in that part of the river. I have seen my friends S. and L. go out on the bare backs of elephants to get a swim in the deep backwaters of the Berhampooter, although there are sure to be alligators in such a place. I know that my friend L. made a very hasty retreat to his animated bathing machine when he fancied that an alligator was making for him. Luckily it was a false alarm, for he might easily have been caught and killed. I had once an unintentional interview with an alligator that looked rather nasty. I was going in a small budgerow or house-boat to join some friends in shooting on the sea-coast of the Sunderbuns. Our rendezvous was to have been at Morellgunge, but I was late, and the others had gone on before me, so I pushed on at night to overtake them. A heavy fog came on during the night, whilst we were making the most of the ebb-tide, and we grounded hopelessly on a large sand-bank, which was about three hundred yards from the main stream of the river. When the sun rose and the fog cleared away, I saw that I was imprisoned for hours until the flood-tide came to set my boat afloat. Luckily a dinghy, with the daily supplies and letters for our camp, was hailed as it was passing, and I determined to transfer myself and my guns to the dinghy and to join my friends. I therefore got out of the budgerow and began to walk over the soft mud towards the dinghy when I saw a large alligator, which had been sunning itself on the sand-bank, was making tracks towards me; at all events, he was going parallel to me, towards the dinghy, so as to cut me off. An alligator on the familiar soil of the sand-bank makes a much better pace with his four legs than an Englishman in his shooting-boots, his feet sinking deep into the soil at each step. Fortunately I had my gun with me, so I halted and fired at my enemy. He did not seem to understand the first shot, or the second, but luckily the third bullet may have hit him, for he lashed his tail and turned off at once towards the nearest water, and left me at liberty to make my way to the dinghy. I think that I was in rather a dangerous position, and if my guns had not been with me that alligator might have made a meal of me. I cannot say how many feet long he was, but he seemed to my fears a huge monster. The alligators in the Sunderbuns grow to a great size, and are uncommonly bold. They sometimes attack the fishermen in their boats; but there are very few fishermen in that part of the country, and it has been observed by several sportsmen that where men are not numerous the wild animals are bolder, and more fearless in their attacks on human beings.

It may be asked why, if I professed such enmity to alligators, I did not always take more systematic measures for their destruction. I fear that my official position and duties would have hardly been consistent with the functions of an alligator-catcher. My friend Mr. F. B. Simson, of the Bengal Civil Service, a much greater sportsman than myself, admits that he never undertook systematically the sport of alligator-killing. He was content to fire the bullets of his rifles at the many monsters that he saw in navigating the rivers of Eastern Bengal, and I may have done much the same thing, for I seldom saw an alligator without firing at it. Much depended on the state of the tides whether or not alligators would be seen; at low tide they lay basking on the mud, at high water they were busy catching fish, and as our steamer or boat passed along, not an alligator was to be seen. It seems rather a curious thing, but I cannot remember that any of the fishermen or low-caste natives of Eastern Bengal devoted themselves specially to the catching of alligators as a profession. Some men used to come from Burmah before its annexation, to kill alligators, and kingfishers, and otters. I was once staying at an indigo factory where two of these Burmese shikarees were at work. They had marked down two large alligators in the bed of the river, and had observed that they used to come out and bask in the sunshine at mid-day. The *modus operandi* was as follows. The shikaree stole up as near as he dared to the sleeping alligator, and then fired from a sort of cross-bow a very sharp little arrow, which easily penetrated the skin. To this arrow there were attached a ball of fine string, and a small bladder. The bladder was the key of the apparatus. The wounded alligator rushed into the water and tried to hide himself, but wherever he went the tell-tale bladder showed his position. It is essential that the water should not be very deep, say about six feet. The position of the alligator being thus known, he is then jobbed with spears and pointed bamboos until his life is weary, and at last one of the shikarees chops off his head with his Burmese dao or axe, and there is an end. The use of the bladder is suggestive of the lighter, which is so well known in the Norfolk Broads, and when you are trying to haul a 20-pound jack into your boat, please remember that the bite of his sharp teeth is hardly less formidable than an alligator's.

C. T. BUCKLAND,
Late Bengal Civil Service.

A Commonplace Man.

I.

THE bright June sunshine filled one of the broad corridors of Lanchester Girls' Grammar School with a flood of glorious light, and through the open windows a faint sweet wind came, whispering and sighing, languid with the warmth of a summer afternoon. The school was still—save for the drum, drum, of scales in a distant music-room and an occasional rustle from behind the closed doors of the class-rooms, where preparation was going on drowsily.

A firm, even step rang on the polished floor, and Miss Lisle, sixth-form mistress, passed through the sunlit corridor, her proud, dark face as haughtily, as coldly serene as ever.

She knocked at the door of the head-mistress's office and obeyed the answering, 'Come in.'

An unusual sight presented itself. A real live man was lounging at his ease in the broad window-seat of the *sanctum sanctorum*, his hands in his pockets, his fair head crushing the muslin curtains remorselessly.

'My brother, Miss Lisle;' and the intruder rose to his six feet and returned Miss Lisle's frigid bow. He felt that the cold, dark eyes had weighed him and disposed of him in one swift glance.

Miss Lisle turned to the head-mistress and stated her errand in terms which were a marvel of comprehensive conciseness.

She came as a deputation from the staff, suggesting some slight change in the routine of the morrow's work. A request preferred by Miss Lisle was, as the mistresses well knew, sure to obtain consideration.

A few references to the time-table, a short discussion of details, and Miss Lisle withdrew.

A congregation of four awaited her in the mistresses' room.

'Well? Can it be done?'

'Yes. It is settled as you wish.'

'Did Miss Grey mind? Was she alone?'

'There was no difficulty about it. None of the children were there; only Miss Grey's brother.'

'A brother!' And four voices spoke in unison, four pairs of eyes were lit with interest and turned upon Miss Lisle's calm face.

'Is he grown up?' asked one.

'Yes. Six-foot, undoubtedly.'

'Young?'

'I believe so.'

Six-foot and young! A thrill of excitement quivered through that maiden coterie, with one exception.

'Where did he spring from?'

'I omitted to ask him,' Miss Lisle replied tranquilly, reaching down a pile of exercise-books from the shelf.

'What is he like?'

'Very commonplace-looking;' and Miss Lisle seated herself at the table with the air of one who has her work cut out and means to do it.

The four knew the signs and took themselves off. They were not going to spend a free hour on this exquisite June afternoon in correcting exercises. Miss Lisle might be able to do it, but then Miss Lisle, as they had long ago decided, was a compound of ice and mathematics rather than flesh and blood.

Whatever her constituent elements might be, Miss Lisle was a power in the school. Nobody denied that. It is true that she excited more fear and admiration than love. She had no such train of ardent worshippers as that which thronged the steps of Miss Evans, the pretty little drawing mistress. Miss Lisle's beauty was too coldly severe, too classically regular, too lacking in light and warmth, to appeal to the many. A few of the elder girls raved about her in secret, but they would as soon have thought of embracing an iceberg as of lavishing caresses on Miss Lisle. In the class-room her power was supreme. She joined a thorough knowledge of her subject to a real aptitude for teaching. Hers, too, was that magnetic influence which makes the maintenance of order a task which demands no strain, a gift which above all others won for her the envy of her colleagues.

The four betook themselves to the tennis-lawn. Possibly the fact that the office faced thitherwards unconsciously influenced their course. They dawdled about on the edge of the court, lazily discussing the desirability of a game. It is to be feared

that not a few furtive glances stole towards that curious patch of grey discernible just inside the office window.

Lanchester was not a large town, and its circle of desirable young men was limited; hence the advent of a new-comer naturally created an interest.

Suddenly, a faint aroma stole upon the breeze. It was—it was—yes, it actually was—the scent of a cigar! And, lo! a desecrating puff of smoke floated between the spotless curtains. It was followed by a sound of voices, of laughter; the curtains swayed excitedly; an arm—two arms—appeared, the one performing a deed of righteous purification, the other bent upon preventing it. But the cigar fell upon the gravel below, and a fair head, followed by a pair of broad shoulders, emerged from the window and regarded it disconsolately.

The four looked at each other and laughed.

‘I wonder how long he’s going to stay.’

‘I wonder if he is married.’

‘Very commonplace-looking!’ And to the best of her ability the speaker mimicked Miss Lisle’s voice and manner.

There was a general laugh.

‘Oh! We all know that if learning doesn’t ooze from a man’s finger-tips, Miss Lisle will have nothing to say to him,’ the little drawing-mistress exclaimed, twirling her racket.

‘Do you remember her dubbing Mr. De Bretnelle “a walking inanity?”’

‘Dear man!’

‘The place is not the same without him!’

‘I prophesy that Miss Lisle will never fall a victim to the monster—Man;’ and Miss Evans complacently twisted a vagabond lock into its place and thought of a certain eye-glassed grammar-school master.

‘Some musty old professor will perhaps subjugate her lofty soul.’

‘I doubt it. Think of the iceberg with—with——’

‘Yes, et ceteras. She’d drop them,’ finished Miss Evans, leading the way back to the school amid the laughter of the rest.

II.

‘So that is your perfect treasure of a mistress,’ Alan Grey remarked, as Miss Lisle’s footsteps died away, quoting some words used previously by his sister in reference to her sixth-form mistress.

‘Yes. Is she not a handsome woman?’

'Faultily faultless, icily regular,' Alan began to quote.

'Don't finish, pray,' interrupted his sister. 'At any rate, Miss Lisle is not "splendidly nil."'

'Oh! Indeed! Glad to hear it!' And the subject was dismissed.

It leaked out, as things will leak out, that Alan Grey had come to Lanchester in his search for renewed health after a serious illness, and that he was the owner of a nice little estate and a corresponding income; also that he possessed his soul in single blessedness.

Alan's first public appearance was at the yearly picnic of the 'Old Girls' Association,' where he enjoyed the distinction of being the sole male intruder. As the Association included the majority of the marriageable young ladies of Lanchester, he was viewed by an audience which did much to promote the series of subsequent tennis parties.

He did not drive in one of the conveyances, filled to overflowing with flimsy summer drapery. That would have been quite too unorthodox. He joined the party on horseback near the woods, and rode behind the wagonette, in which the two end seats were occupied by his sister and Miss Lisle.

They lunched, in true picnic fashion, among the bracken, and Alan lounged on his elbow next to Miss Lisle, and quietly observed her.

The younger members of the Association, still school girls, and as yet having no dignity to preserve, declared Alan to be 'perfectly splendid,' and romped with him boisterously. He was neither too young nor too old. His blue eyes were so kindly, his smooth-shaven face so good-humoured, and he was so full of fun. Surely, no picnic had ever been quite so delightful as this!

Tea in the quaint little wood-girt village was followed by a perfect carnival in a hay-field. There, the wilder spirits buried Alan, and screamed with delight when he rose from the mound, bent on vengeance, and hunted them from one end of the field to the other.

Miss Lisle, with 'Prometheus Unbound' upon her knee, sat in calm serenity and viewed the scamper.

Surely, the very demon of mischief must have prompted Alan, when he dropped over her a mighty armful of hay. For one awful moment the youthful members of the Association stood aghast, and then, with a shout of triumph, completed the entombment,

No struggling here! Pile on pile of hay and still no resistance! Under such circumstances ardour cooled perceptibly.

'Perhaps we've smothered her!' whispered Katie Hibbert, her big eyes open their widest.

A simultaneous dash was made at the spot where Miss Lisle might be found. The hay was scattered to right and left, and Miss Lisle was revealed, in a recumbent position, but in no wise disturbed, save that her hat had disappeared.

'Have you finished?' she inquired coolly, looking round for her missing head-gear.

Alan fished it out and presented it to her with a deep reverence.

'Allow me to congratulate you, Miss Lisle, on your admirable coolness under trying circumstances,' he said, doffing his straw with an extravagant wave.

'Thank you, Mr. Grey.' And Miss Lisle picked the wisps of hay from her hat and put it on.

'Just like her,' murmured Miss Evans to a fellow-mistress; 'it speaks well for masculine courage that he dared attempt such a deed.'

III.

During the two months which followed, Alan met Miss Lisle frequently, and various conjectures as to the possible culmination of affairs were rife among the mistresses. It was evident that Alan sought Miss Lisle's society on every possible occasion, but it was not so evident whether his attentions met with any response from Miss Lisle. They watched in vain for a sign of self-consciousness upon her proud face.

Miss Grey was somewhat astonished at Alan's prolonged visit. She expected a week or a fortnight to be the utmost limit of his stay.

'What is Miss Lisle's Christian name?' he asked his sister abruptly, as they sat in the garden together one dusky summer evening.

'Stella,' replied Miss Grey in a startled voice, a light suddenly breaking in upon her.

'Polar star!' ejaculated Alan, and silence reigned again.

It wanted but one week to the term-end, when Miss Grey gave a little evening party, the guests being her own staff of mistresses and the masters from the Boys' Grammar School.

This function occurred once a term, and was usually an unqualified success.

They danced in the school hall, and it was noticed that Alan danced several waltzes with Miss Lisle.

One of the large class-rooms was converted, for the nonce, into a drawing-room, and someone proposed that they should try a little thought-reading there. Several victims were blindfolded, and did, or did not, obey the will of the medium with varying success.

Miss Lisle and the head-master discussed the new method of teaching languages in the intervals between each attempt.

'Miss Lisle, do come and try,' exclaimed Miss Evans, in search of a fresh subject.

'It is of no use,' Miss Lisle replied calmly; 'I afford no amusement. I have been experimented upon several times to no purpose.'

'But do come and try to-night,' persisted Miss Evans.

'Yes, Miss Lisle,' Alan said, advancing with the handkerchief; 'come and be experimented upon once more. I will be your medium.'

His frank blue eyes challenged her to measure her will with his. A faint flush dawned in Miss Lisle's pale cheeks.

'I warn you, Mr. Grey, that I am not a promising subject,' she said coldly; but, nevertheless, took the handkerchief and went out into the corridor.

Alan placed his pencil-case upon the table and decreed that Miss Lisle should pick it up. His hands trembled as he blindfolded her and led her into the room. His eyes shone with the strength of his determination, and his face was set.

Miss Lisle's mouth was closed in firm lines. Her head was raised a little and thrown back with the air of one who fears no defeat.

A quiver of excitement ran round the room. There were those who guessed that it was more than play to Alan.

Two long minutes passed before a slight shiver shook Miss Lisle from head to foot. Her lips parted. She made a step forward. Alan's face flushed a deep red. Slowly, waveringly, they approached the table. Gropingly, Miss Lisle put out her free hand and grasped the pencil-case.

There was a Babel of voices. The spell was broken. Miss Lisle tore off the handkerchief and met Alan's triumphant eyes. In her hand was the convincing pencil-case. The angry colour surged over her face and neck, and even flashed down the little pointed opening in her bodice. She dropped the pencil-case as though it stung her.

'I detest you!' she exclaimed, with the accent and bearing of a petulant child, and rushed from the room.

Only those in the immediate vicinity had caught her words, but all had seen the impetuous flight of the dignified Miss Lisle, and smiled openly at such an unwonted melting of the ice.

They gave up thought-reading and betook themselves to dancing again—all save Alan, who wandered disconsolately along the dimly-lighted corridors upstairs. Behind which of those closed doors had Miss Lisle taken refuge? Would she ever forgive him his victory?

It was like an electric shock, when she did appear, and they faced each other for a moment in silence.

'Are you lost, Mr. Grey? Shall I guide you downstairs?'

Alan felt as though the cold, clear tones were little rills of water trickling beneath his shirt-front. But a stout heart beat at the correct spot in his six feet of flesh and blood.

'Miss Lisle, are you going to bear malice?' And he turned and walked at her side.

'I think it is you who may be expected to bear malice, Mr. Grey,' was the serene answer. 'I have been ridiculously rude to you. Pass the verdict as temporary insanity and forgive me.'

'I will, if you will ask pardon properly,' Alan exclaimed boldly.

'What formula would please you best, Mr. Grey?'

They were nearing the last turn in the corridor. The music in the hall rose to their ears more distinctly every moment.

Alan seized Miss Lisle's hand.

'This formula would please me best. Say—"Alan, I love you."'

'Your mathematics are rusty. Such a formula is hardly applicable,' and Miss Lisle, freeing her hand, ran quietly downstairs.

Alan looked after her ruefully. He decided that he had made a mess of it.

IV.

Saturday passed, and Sunday afternoon, without a sign of Miss Lisle, and Alan grew impatient. Next week she would, doubtless, be buried in examination papers.

In his desperation he had recourse to his sister. Setting down his tea-cup with a determined clatter, he plunged into the subject nearest his heart.

'Nell, I must see Miss Lisle. I can't exactly go over to the boarding-house. The first sound of the bell would make me beat a retreat. There are too many women to face. You must produce her somehow to-night. I rely upon you.'

Miss Grey looked at her brother meditatively. She knew Miss Lisle better than he, and saw nothing but disappointment in store for him.

'I will do my best,' she said briefly.

The first sound of the church bells found Miss Grey pacing slowly to and fro upon the terrace which bordered the road. Presently, Miss Lisle and another mistress emerged from the boarding-house with prayer-books in their hands.

Miss Grey leaned across the stone balustrade and waited their approach.

'Stella, I want you,' she said, in a voice which would take no refusal.

Miss Lisle came slowly up the path.

As they crossed the lawn, the head-mistress spoke of the beautiful weather, of the unusually strong scent from the flowers, of 'this morning's sermon,' but Miss Lisle only gave monosyllabic replies.

The drawing-room door was wide open. Alan stood in the window recess.

'It is Alan who wants you, not I,' Miss Grey said in a matter-of-fact tone, deserting Miss Lisle upon the threshold and closing the door after her.

'What an unromantic meeting!' she exclaimed, as she adjusted her hat for church.

Alan's first words were curious. Perhaps they were the only ones that came into his mind.

'Come and listen to the Windfell bells,' he said, placing a chair for Miss Lisle in the square, projecting window, which was wide open. Miss Lisle took it silently.

Lanchester Grammar School was built on the outskirts of the town, and a pleasant landscape of field and wooded hill stretched before them. The little village of Windfell nestled in the valley below, and from its white church tower a musical pealing of bells was borne on the summer breeze.

The lulling warmth, the Sabbath peace, the golden light and long shadows, the faint, sweet music of the bells wrought upon Miss Lisle's senses. Their enervating influence stole over her

and directed the tenour of her thoughts. She drew off her gloves and laid aside her hat, as if their slight pressure annoyed her. The reason of this interview could not but be known to her, and she braced herself to go through with it, and to dispose of it as loyalty to her highest ideals of life demanded.

The bells seemed to fill the silence between them. Alan alternately watched her and looked out of the window. He was in no hurry to speak. It was enough to have her there without fear of interruption.

Miss Lisle rested her arm upon the sill and looked straight ahead, across the fields to Windfell. She found that a mental conflict, which in the silence of night had been fought and stifled, was rekindling its forces. The quiet peace of the Sabbath evening seemed to thrust far away the worry and toil of school-life, to lull ambition into a soothing slumber, and to idealise a narrower, but more sheltered and peaceful, sphere. Miss Lisle felt the mystic spell and trembled.

The bells suddenly ceased. Speech became necessary. Alan stood up and turned his back upon the window.

'Miss Lisle, I love you as much as a man can love. Will you be my wife?'

The simple, manly words brought a look of pain into Miss Lisle's eyes. She rose to her feet. Now that the crisis had come, she was firm to meet it.

'Mr. Grey, I thank you for the honour, but I cannot be your wife. I thought you would understand without words.'

'You do not love me?'

'No.'

'But you could love me in time. I could make you love me. I know it. I feel it.'

Miss Lisle flinched beneath his impetuous words.

'You know it, too!' he exclaimed triumphantly. 'I will wait a month, a year, any time; only let me try to win you.'

'No,' Miss Lisle said again decisively but very gently; 'it is not my intention to marry. I could not be happy married. It would not satisfy me.'

'Stella, if you loved me it would change all that. You would be happy then.'

'No, I should not be happy even then. I should not be true to my ideals.'

'Life with me does not come up to your ideal, I suppose,'

Alan replied bitterly. 'I am not very intellectual, it is true; but I offer you myself, my whole life, the best that is in me.'

'And I can give you nothing in return.'

'Nothing?'

'Nothing;' and Miss Lisle picked up her hat and gloves.

Alan barred her way to the door for a brief moment. His voice was husky and uneven.

'Your ideal life will fail you one day, and then—remember that I shall be still waiting.'

Miss Grey returned from church to find Alan packing his portmanteau.

V.

Twelve years later, Miss Lisle had realised many of her early ambitions. As the successful head-mistress of a large and thriving Girls' High School, and as a prominent figure in the literary circles of a large town, her sphere was by no means narrow. At forty, scarcely a grey line was apparent in her abundant masses of dark hair, and her face had still the clear-cut, marble-like beauty, which sometimes remains even to extreme old age.

It was a hazy autumn afternoon, towards the end of the 'long holiday,' when Miss Lisle expected a visit from her quondam head-mistress, Miss Grey. She stood at a window as the hansom stopped, and saw two figures, instead of one, emerge from it and approach the visitors' door.

Twelve years had passed since she had seen Alan Grey. The sight of him moved her more than she had thought possible.

'You see I have an escort,' Miss Grey said, warmly greeting her friend.

Alan's deep blue eyes searched Miss Lisle's face with a curiously questioning glance. He was much thinner than formerly. There were hollows beneath his cheek-bones, and an attenuated look about his temples, new to Miss Lisle.

'Has your brother been ill?' she asked, as Alan paused to examine an old print on the staircase of the new west wing, which was the pride of her heart.

'He is often ill,' Miss Grey replied in a low voice, glancing round to assure herself that Alan was out of earshot. 'When he was a young man and we were staying with my married sister at Liverpool, there was a tremendous fire opposite the house, and Alan got his side hurt in saving a woman. He has never been

really well since. I tell him that he wants a wife to take care of him, but he always gives me one answer—that he is “waiting.” Curious, is it not?’

‘Very,’ Miss Lisle replied in a faint voice.

One object of Miss Grey’s visit was the interviewing of a student-mistress, whom Miss Lisle thought fitted to fill a vacancy at Lanchester; hence, for a short time Alan and Miss Lisle were alone.

‘Is this your ideal life?’ he asked abruptly, referring to their conversation of twelve years ago as though it were of yesterday.

‘It was my ideal life,’ Miss Lisle replied slowly, her innate truthfulness compelling a use of the past tense.

‘And is no longer?’ Alan questioned eagerly.

‘I—I—do not know,’ and for once in her life Miss Lisle stammered and faltered.

‘I know!’ Alan exclaimed joyfully. ‘You are tired of being alone in a crowd. Come to me now. Be my wife at last. I have waited for twelve years.’

Like a lightning flash Miss Lisle saw the two paths stretching before her, the prominent, lonely position she now occupied contrasting itself with the quiet, dual life in Alan’s country home. What a falling from her pedestal, what a laying down of her colours it would be! Burning words of hers against the folly of girls regarding marriage as the sole desirable fate of woman recurred to her. More than once such words had been uttered in the school-hall and elsewhere. ‘Ah!’ people would say, ‘she has only been waiting for a chance, after all.’

Alan was very close to her; his hand touched her sleeve; she felt his breath upon her cheek. The one or the many, which was to win?

‘Stella!’ and her hand was locked in his.

She snatched it away.

‘No! No! It cannot be! Never ask me again.’

‘Never?’

‘No.’

‘Then I shall have to wait until the end,’ and the dreary ring in Alan’s voice echoed for Miss Lisle until the end came.

Within sight of the school ran an elevated viaduct, and an hour later Miss Lisle watched the train, which was bearing Alan away, cross and disappear. How large and lonely the school

seemed! How ugly the west wing, for the building of which she had striven so long!

The last puff of steam died away against the darkening blue of the sky, and Miss Lisle, resting her head upon the hard wood of a school desk, found the hot tears welling up into her eyes.

The love of the one had been pitted against the criticism of the many, and had lost; but it would cry in her heart with a bitter wail until, in the consummation of all things, its craving should be stilled.

KEITH KENYON.

The Pleiades.

AMONG the glories of our winter skies, no constellation can compare with Orion, no star rivals Sirius, no cluster charms like the Pleiades, and one imaginary line connects them all. Pass from Sirius through Orion's belt and we reach the Seven Stars, so often sung by poets, so famous in myth, so useful to antiquity, so pregnant with meaning for modern science.

To the Greeks they were the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione whom Zeus raised to the sky. They were virgin companions of Artemis pursued by the hunter Orion, but whose prayers for rescue were granted by the gods, who changed them into doves, and placed them in the sky. They were the Atlantids, sisters of the Hyades, that other star-cluster in Taurus. They all were married to gods save one, Merope, who wedded with a mortal, and whose light was therefore dimmed. They were like doves who carried ambrosia to Zeus, but always one got lost in passing the Planctæ rocks, and always Zeus made their number up again to seven.

In Germany, and generally in Europe, they are the hen and chickens; to the Germans, *Glückhenne*; to the French, *pous-sinière*; to the Italians, *le gallinelle*.

The Spaniards know them as 'the little nanny-goats,' the Lapps as the 'company of virgins,' which links us on to myths from other lands, for in Florida they are the 'company of maidens.' The Indians of North America call them the 'dancers,' and the aborigines of Australia say the stars in Orion's belt and sword are young men dancing a *corroboree*, and the Pleiades are girls who play them music; while one of the tribes, at least, sees in them a flock of cockatoos, who are all feminine.

Another Australian tribe have a tradition that the Pleiades were a queen called Gneearang and her six attendants. A long time ago the star Canopus fell in love with her, but could not gain her affection or her person. Hearing that she was going

one day to look for white grubs, he changed himself into one, and bored into a tree where he was sure to be seen. All of the attendants tried to get the grub out with their wooden hooks, but he broke the points, and only when the queen put in her ivory hook did he allow himself to be withdrawn, and, changing into a giant, ran off with the queen. Ever since that day there have been but six stars in the Pleiades, where formerly were seven.

This 'lost Pleiad' and the giant capturer offer a curious resemblance to the stories of the Greeks and the Norsemen, but a resemblance more curious still is that of a Polynesian legend to some modern theories of collisions among the stars.

The legend tells that the Pleiades were originally but one star, and its bright effulgence excited the anger of the god Tane, who got hold of Aumea (Aldebaran) and Mere (Sirius) and chased the offender. The affrighted fugitive ran for his life and took refuge behind a stream. But Sirius drained off the waters, and Tane renewed the chase. Finally, Tane hurled Aldebaran bodily against the exhausted fugitive, who was thereby splintered into six shining fragments. By these same people the cluster is sometimes called *Tau-ouo*, 'the six,' and sometimes *Matariki*, or 'little eyes,' on account of their brightness.

In Samoa they become 'the eyes of chiefs;' the Arabs called them 'the little ones;' the Incas admired them because they seemed to them different from other stars and 'because of their marvellous disposition.'

To Job the Pleiades and a few others seem typical of the whole heavens. 'Canst Thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?' And elsewhere he speaks of God 'which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South'—the southern constellations possibly, some only occasionally, and some never seen in Job's latitude; while Amos also mentions 'the seven stars and Orion.'

The Abipones of Paraguay thought them worthy of a distinguished place and chief honour, and considered themselves descendants of the Pleiades, and as this star-cluster disappears at certain times of the year from the sky of South America, they suppose that then their grandfather is sick and is going to die, but as soon as the Pleiades are seen again in the month of May, they welcome their grandfather, as if returned and restored from sickness, with joyful shouts and festive sounds of pipes and trumpets, congratulating him on the recovery of his health.

For the Chinese the 'Seven Sisters' are among the most popular of the heavenly bodies for worship. At the festival of the Pleiades a paper tray filled with seven imitation mirrors and other objects in sets of seven are burnt as offerings to these star spirits.

It has been pointed out that some of the passages in the Pyramids, through which the observer looks as through a long tube, point to the position of the culmination of the Pleiades at the time of the building, and it is possible that the seven chambers of the great pyramid commemorate the seven Pleiades, just as the Incas had a temple with special apartments consecrated to the Moon, to Venus, to the Pleiades, and to other stars.

But we are getting suggestions here of the uses to which the Pleiades were put by ancient or uncivilised people, for, being a striking and unmistakable object, the cluster served admirably to mark the seasons and to act as guide to agriculturists and sailors. The period regarded was their heliacal rising or setting, viz., the times when they rose or set as nearly at the same time as the Sun as could be detected by observation. Thus the Polynesians divided the year into two seasons of Pleiades above and Pleiades below; the first beginning when they were seen rising after sunset, and the second when they were seen setting with the Sun.

In the New Hebrides they are used to mark the approach of the yam harvest. The Amazulus say that 'Isilimela' (the Pleiades) dies and is not seen. It is not seen in winter; and at last when winter is coming to an end it begins to appear—one of its stars first and then three, until going on increasing it becomes a cluster of stars, and is perfectly clear when the Sun is about to rise. 'And we say Isilimela is renewed; and the air is renewed, and so we begin to dig.'

And Hesiod, 1,000 years B.C., sings of them:

There is a time when forty days they lie,
And forty nights concealed from human eye,
But in the course of the revolving year
When the swain sharps the scythe again appear.

As they announced the opening of the season for navigation their name has been interpreted (from *plein* = to sail) the 'sailing stars,' and even from old legends or old custom of letting fly a pigeon for auspices at this time, they are the 'doves' (from *peleia*, a dove), though almost certainly their Greek name, like their Arabic and Hebrew, means simply 'cluster' (from *pleios*,

full). Their Latin name was *Vergiliæ*, from 'Ver' the spring, for their heliacal rising in Italy was in the beginning of May and their setting early in November.

The Polynesians used them not only for determining their seasons, but also as a guide at sea. When setting out on a voyage, some star or constellation was selected as their guide at night. This they called their 'Aveia,' and they now designate the compass by the same name; of all aveias the Pleiades was one of the most popular.

In South Africa they are the hoeing stars; they are the chief items in the Calendar of the Solomon Islanders, and their last visible rising after sunset is, or has been, celebrated with rejoicings all over the Southern Hemisphere, as betokening the waking-up time to agricultural activity.

With November, the 'Pleiad month,' many primitive people began their year, and on the day of the midnight culmination of the Pleiades, November 17, no petition was presented in vain to the ancient kings of Persia.

And thus they have entered into the life of man, charming him by their beauty, and aiding him by their position; they have passed into the world's store of myths, and become part of the imagery of poets.

The gay Alexandrians gave the nickname of the Pleiades to a constellation of seven poets, by whom the court of Philadelphus was adorned, and Longfellow can even find a lost Pleiad in so prosaic a personage as an innkeeper.

Six stories told! we must have seven,
A cluster like the Pleiades;
And lo! it happens as with these
One star is missing from our heaven.
Where is the Landlord, bring him here,
Let the lost Pleiad reappear.

But in the 'Tales of a Wayside Inn' the lost Pleiad did not reappear, and a certain mystery attaches still to the lost Pleiad of the skies.

There is so widespread a tradition that they 'were seven who now are six,' that it seems more likely to have had its origin in actual fact than in the spread of the legend from a common source.

Most people now, on a good night, can count six stars in the group, eyes a little better see ten, and even fourteen have been seen by some very keen observers, with the eye alone. But we

have abundant cases of variable stars, and fairly plausible evidence in regard to the star Pleione that its light may have varied so as to fade below the limits of the unaided human vision, and thus the long tradition of the lost Pleiad may receive a literal explanation and its accuracy as an observation be established.

But the group has many more stars in it than 7. Galileo put the number down at 36; Hooke, in 1664, saw 78 with a 2-inch object glass; in 1876 M. Wolf at Paris catalogued 625; but photography brought the number up to 1,421 in a smaller space, and later to 2,326. Some few of these stars are only seen in the same line of sight, and do not really belong to the cluster, but the great mass of those photographed (and doubtless many others that longer exposures will reveal) belong to the cluster, and are at approximately the same distance from us.

The difference in the light received from different stars is so great as to imply that some stars may be 100,000 times as bright as others, and this not on account of their decreased distance, but because of their size or of the intensity of their light.

And this fact has largely been learnt from the Pleiades, since they have offered the best proof of difference in light among stars known to be at the same distance from us.

How brilliant a cluster the Pleiades really is may be gathered from the fact that their light travels for 250 years, at the rate of 186,000 miles a second, before it reaches us, and therefore the concentrated light of the Pleiades at the distance of one mile would be $2\frac{1}{4}$ quintillion (225 followed by 28 ciphers) times as intense as it appears to us.

If our Sun were removed to the Pleiades it would hardly be visible in an opera glass with which nearly 100 stars can be seen in the cluster. 60 or 70 Pleiades surpass our Sun in brilliancy, Alcyone being 1,000 times more brilliant, Electra nearly 500 times, and Maia nearly 400. 'Sirius itself takes a subordinate rank when compared with the five most brilliant members of a group, the real magnificence of which we can thus in some degree apprehend.'¹

If we seek to know the dimensions not of the individual stars but of the cluster itself, we are met with many difficulties, but on the assumption that it is approximately spherical in shape, we can calculate its diameter to be over 40 billion miles, so that light would take 7 years to pass from one extreme to the other.

¹ The System of the Stars. Miss Agnes M. Clerk. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1890, p. 226.

If we think of the dimensions of our Solar System by themselves, or in relation to terrestrial matters, they appear stupendously enormous. Neptune, the most distant known member, has an orbit over 5,000 million miles across; a distance that a ray of light would travel in $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours; but the Solar System is to the Pleiades but as a Lilliputian to a Brobdingnagian—is but as a microbe to a mountain, for a sphere the size of the Solar System would, if it were spherical and its diameter that of the orbit of Neptune, be relatively so minute that it could be contained more than four hundred thousand million times in a sphere the size of the Pleiades; in other words, the limits of the Pleiades could contain 150 solar systems as many times over as there are miles between Neptune and the Sun.

It must not be forgotten that though there are 2,300 stars in the cluster, yet with such dimensions for the entire group vast distances must separate the stars from one another. In fact, 2,300 spheres, each with a diameter of three billion miles, could be contained in the limits assigned to the group, and assuming equal distribution of the stars in the group, each would be at the centre of a sphere three billion miles across, and therefore a light journey of 187 days from its nearest neighbour.

Our nearest neighbour among the stars is distant a four years' light journey, so that in spite of long distances between the Pleiades, they are truly a cluster, closer together than stars are as a rule; though they thus form one connected whole, we are able to recognise in it minor combinations united by closer bonds; it contains double and multiple stars almost certainly in revolution round a common centre; the drift of the whole seems to be slowly leaving behind some stars not perhaps organically connected with it, while the minor drifts noticed in several cases would appear to indicate the existence of smaller communities in the federation of the whole.

There would appear to be in progress a process of disintegration tending to separate the daughters of Atlas one from another. Alcyone indeed would seem to be an intruder, only in optical, and not in physical alliance, but the course of ages will probably see a more marked dissociation of the at present associated parts.

Two strong testimonials exist to the common origin of the great bulk of the cluster. One is the similarity of the light as shown by the spectroscope; the other is the astounding background of nebulosity revealed by photography. The picture of the Pleiades in recent photographs seems to have one vast back-

ground of faintly luminous haze, concentrated round the brightest stars as though they were in process of condensation from the cloudiness of nebulae to the solidity of worlds. But the distribution of these cloud masses affords evidence of physical unity, indicates connection between the masses they envelope, and implies a physical reality in the arrangement of clusters involving the operation of familiar laws on the most exalted scale.

There was a time before the days of spectroscopy when it was held more or less plausibly that with sufficient telescopic power any so-called nebula could be resolved into separate stars, but the spectroscope very soon established the inaccuracy of this view, and now photography, that other mighty instrument in the hands of modern astronomers, has revealed the transition stage from nebulae to stars, and nowhere better, nowhere more significantly, than in the cluster of the Pleiades.

As they came down to us through the ages, gathering round them the fancy and romance of every country and of every age, they charm us with an interest that cannot die; as in the wintry sky they

Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies, tangled in a silver braid,

we feel their beauty as perhaps we feel that of no other object in the heavens; but as little by little we learn from the prosaic mechanism, chemicals and calculations of the astronomers, something of their real nature, something of the process of their growth, the romance of ages grows to be common-place, the imagery of poets becomes tame and insignificant, while the fairy tale of science shines out like a new Aleyone, more fascinating than the songs of poets, more attractive than the myths of time; far more beautiful, far more wonderful, far more nearly true.

WILLIAM SCHOOLING.

In Ambush at the Lake-side.

ONCE more I am in my night ambush, prepared to see whatever is good enough to come forth from its sanctuary within the forest, and to parade itself in the open for my inspection. My ambush is again a pine-branch tent, or *shalashka*, the little edifice which has been my refuge and centre of observation for many a cold northern night—spring-time nights, indeed, but nights of more degrees of frost than the sportsman or naturalist of temperate Britain has dreamed of in his coldest excursions into the realms of imagination. My tent on this occasion is not pitched upon one of those open spaces in mid-forest, whereon the blackcock love to hold their nocturnal or early-matutinal tournaments, where the laughing willow-grouse—that faithful lover—sports with his pretty white mate, and the dark forest trees form a romantic background to the proceedings of both. To-night I am placed in the midst of the marshy approach to a wide sheet of water—an annexe, in fact, to the great lake Ladoga. Fifty yards or more in front of me the waters, but lately released from their entire subjection to the yoke of winter, may be heard softly lapping the shore in a series of gentle kisses, stolen in the darkness; for it is but three in the morning—if that, and I can see nothing but the broad wing of Night still stretched over land and lake. On either side of the *shalashka* there extends, I believe, a spur of moorland; behind is the forest: never far away in a Russian landscape.

I am still in the dreamy, semi-conscious condition superinduced by the long ride through gloom and silence which has intervened between supper last evening, twenty miles away, and my arrival here. The little ponies to whom we are indebted for our conveyance in perfect safety, through darkness which even the marvellous eyes of a Finn pony could hardly have penetrated, are some little way off, behind us, hidden among the pine trees, waiting with the philosophic content of their tribe until it shall have

pleased us to accomplish the object of our nightly pilgrimage and return to them.

The Finn pony, good, faithful soul, accepts everything at his master's hands with unquestioning docility and good temper; he is never surprised or annoyed; never taken aback by an obstacle in his way, but rather sets himself to seek out the best means to circumvent such obstacle. If his master happens to be drunk or asleep, this is a matter of supreme indifference to the little animal between the shafts of the inebriate's cart or beneath his saddle, for he is perfectly able and ready to manage the whole business of getting himself and his master safely home, without the slightest interference from the latter. One of the canniest and best of animals, one of the handiest of the servants of mankind, and the most faithful and reliable of his friends, is the Finn pony; and I am glad indeed to be able to put this fact forward, and thus do a good turn for a little-known hero among those who are not personally acquainted with his claims to that title.

Asleep at my side is Ivan, and Ivan is—I am delighted to say—too tired or too considerate to snore: I do not care which it is so long as he does not play his usual nocturnal tunes and spoil this dreamy unreality in which I am steeped. I am here to take notes; but what notes can a man take when, not only is there nothing to be seen, and nothing to be heard—save the gentle plash of the lake, but he is not even convinced of the fact that he is himself, or at all events that he is awake and not dreaming? Such is my condition at present. Everything seems far, far away. My old self, my own history, even the point of time, three hours ago by the things we used to call watches, when I left the lodge and started upon my long, dark, silent ride—seems to be separated from me by an eternity of space and tranquil, incidentless existence. What shall I do to pass away the next hour or two? Sleep? Heaven forbid—the stillness is too good for that! Review my past? Heaven forbid again—nothing half so unpleasant! Whatever I do must be done in consciousness and must be connected with the immediate present or the future; no ghostly past shall be admitted into the sanctity of these hours. I shall recline and watch the dark plumage of Night, and listen to her soft sounds of peace, and satisfaction, and maternity, as she broods over her nest and her little ones, until the hunter Day shall come and chase her from it, and drive her far away over the sea to her sanctuary beyond the eastern gates of the world.

And, first, what a marvellous thing is this darkness! Far

away at home, in bed in one's own room, the darkness is nothing; because the bearings of each object in the chamber are known to you whether in light or darkness. You can, if you please, sit up in bed and point with the hand and say: 'There is the window, and there the door, and there the wardrobe,' and so on. But here, where I lie and stare out into the blackness, I can determine nothing of the million animate or inanimate objects around me; I may people the darkness with what beings I please until the light arrives; it is an area in which imagination may disport itself on free wings and none can contradict its tales, for none knows what bantlings may not be concealed here beneath the shelter of Mother Night's extended wings. How do I know that a company of elves are not disporting themselves within a yard or two of my tent—as ignorant of my proximity as I am of theirs? How can I tell that some dreadful wild beast is not, at this instant, feeling his way down to the waters of the lake, in order to allay his thirst after having feasted upon our poor ponies, behind there in the wood? I can imagine an interview between a ferocious bear or two gaunt wolves and our faithful little quadrupeds, whose one idea in life is to do their duty and eat the breakfast, each day, that the gods provide. I can see the wolves arrive and find the ponies, and say:

'Good evening, my friends; we regret to say you are required for our supper.'

'That's impossible,' the ponies reply; 'we are needed to carry our masters home to Dubrofka.'

'Oh, *that's* all right,' say those wolves, to whom a lie is an unconsidered trifle; 'your masters sent us on to tell you it was all arranged!' Whereupon the ponies believe the tale and are ready to be eaten, because it is part of the day's work as ordained by their master, which is another way of spelling God in their language.

I think I know pretty well, however, what I should see, or some of the things I should see, if an electric light were suddenly switched on and illuminated the ground around my tent. Close at hand, here, on the shingly sand at the edge of the lake, there are seven or eight or more little grey and white sandpipers, fast asleep—perhaps standing on one leg apiece—among the stones, which are so like them in tint that it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other, even by daylight. Then, somewhere within eye-shot, though maybe half a mile off, there is a flock of cranes standing, like a body of sentinels met to compare notes, or

relieve guard, also probably employing but one leg each to balance themselves upon during the hours of repose. I wonder whether they use a different leg on alternate nights, or whether the same one is told off for night duty each time? If so, it is very hard indeed for the one limb thus employed to receive no share of the repose enjoyed by the rest of the body, but to be obliged to toil on night after night, and day after day, while its lazy fellow-limb gets all the rest and only half the work. But such is life. I am sure there are cranes near, for I heard their outposts give the alarm when we splashed through the marshy approach to this spot on our arrival here. Luckily Ivan knew the password, which was the grunt of an elk, as which animals—in search of a drink—we were permitted to come within the precincts of craneland without alarming the big grey birds to the departure point. In a very short time we shall hear them going through the business of waking up, and complaining of the hardship involved in keeping early hours. Then again, there are ducks, numbers of them, I feel sure of it, though not one of them has yet uttered a sound, because this place is a paradise for ducks, and Mother Night covers many a fond couple of them—paired by this time, and tasting the sweets of love and the lovely anticipations of nest-time and prospective flappers. Perhaps there is a pretty pair of tiny painted teal within a biscuit toss, little lovers nestling in a ridge of the coarse moorland, or amid the yellow grass which waves all around me, though I cannot see a blade. Perhaps they woke up when we came tramping by, and peered with long glossy neck outstretched, and beady eyes straining to pierce the gloom, on the very point of rising and disappearing together into the sanctuary of the darkness, but quieted down when we entered our *shalashka*, and ceased to approach their nestling place. Or a pair of snipe, or a ruff and a reeve, the former, at this season, a thing of exquisite beauty by reason of the Elizabethan ruff which gives him his name. Each male member of his family is furnished with one of these, and not one is like another in hue, though all are beautiful. They are of every conceivable tint and variety, and certainly metamorphose the bird completely, giving him the handsomest possible appearance so long as it lasts; but alas! when the court-ing days are over, and the fair one has capitulated to the beautiful besieging party,—presto!—his principal beauty exists no more, and he becomes, without his noble collar, the dullest and least interesting of birds. Hard on the hen bird, I call it, and savouring of deception. How would Angelina like it were Edwin—the

luxuriance or rakishness of whose moustaches or beard had been instrumental in captivating her affections—were Edwin, I say, to shave off those appendages so soon as her fond heart was fairly his own? If Angelina threw him over, under the circumstances, I am sure no one could blame her. But if the darkness is mysterious and wonderful, and full of subtle, hidden potentialities, what shall we say of the marvellous silence? The repose of it is almost *too* great. I feel at every instant as though something or somebody *must* suddenly break out into sound. Either the heavens themselves must—this moment or the next—burst forth into a great, grand chorus of divine music, or a bird must sing, or a beast roar. There is something in the air which *must* out; any sound would do, but a loud hymn would be the most satisfying at this instant. What a silence it is! The tension is oppressive when you come to listen to it, yet, if you were in the humour, how you could lean your very soul against it, and rest—rest! But to-night I must have sound soon—my nerves demand it—I cannot bear this much longer; if no wolf howls within the next few minutes or no crane gives tongue, if no sandpiper whistles or duck quacks, I must wake Ivan and bid him talk. I am outside the beat of the willow-grouse, else he would have broken the oppressive spell an hour ago. Oh, for a chord of music! Oh, to hear an organ swell out, but for a moment, and then die away again; or to listen, close at hand, to the soul-deep song of the nightingale! Something is going to sound forth in a moment; I feel it—now—now!—there! . . . I knew it must come just then, I had a presentiment of it. It is a snipe high up in the air, tracing his embroidery upon the sky-line overhead, and swooping at intervals with a sound as of a sheep's 'baa;'; it comes dropping upon the ear at intervals of a few seconds. If that snipe had not come to save my reason I believe I should have shouted like a lunatic the next minute, which would assuredly have given Ivan a fit.

There goes a night-hawk, flitting by in the darkness like a ghost. Oh, what a voice! When he gives tongue I wish the silence back again. Go hence, noisy spirit of night, and hunt your moths elsewhere. No wonder you can scream loudly with a mouth like that, for when you open it your head seems to split in two pieces. There will be no more silence now; the night-jar has murdered sleep. Listen to the sentinel crane—or is it the boots or the chambermaid of the community awakening the family? He screams loudly to them, but they answer drowsily. 'Have you not made a mistake in the time?' they are saying.

'It cannot, surely, be time to get up yet?' It is though, Madame Crane, and you must quickly let down that other leg and see about the breakfast. In a minute or two there will be such a clamour of conversation among the crane community that any person within a radius of five miles will be aware of their presence. I should say that the cry of the crane is a better traveller than any other sound that I have heard. The birds require a good voice for communicating with one another during flight, for a large flock will often separate into many little bands of two or three while on the 'march,' and the straggling units must be picked up by nightfall. They must have strayed far away indeed if they cannot hear when their friends hail them at the full pitch of the crane-voice!

Now comes another sound. Far away at first, but nearing at each repetition. A sad, melancholy note, falling at intervals of a second or two. I have heard it often before, and wondered what it could be. I have heard it as they who produced it—whoever they might be—passed at night far above the sleeping city, and have felt a great pity for the sad wandering spirits flying and wailing through the darkness—whither? Perhaps they were the souls of the unbaptized, I have thought, which must wander, according to a Slavonic tradition, over land and sea for seven years, seeking and entreating to be baptized. If they happen upon anyone so pure of spirit that he can hear and understand the spirit voices appealing to him, and will grant their request by repeating aloud the baptismal formula, those souls are saved, and wander no longer in the guise of cuckoo, or of bird of passage, or in any other bodily form, but go straightway rejoicing to the place which is prepared for them—there to await the great day of the Resurrection.

Should their term of seven years pass by and find them still unbaptized, then they are doomed to lose for ever their soulship, and to go down into stream or lake as soulless water-elves—the spirits of the seas and rivers.

But Ivan does not allow my thoughts to wander into folk-lore this night. The cranes have awakened him, and he has heard this last mysterious sound also. It has excited him. His finger is at his lip, and he is listening. 'What is it, Ivan? Speak!'

'Hush!' says Ivan. 'This is what we came for!' (There was a *raison d'être* for our presence here; I forgot to mention this circumstance before.) 'It is the geese!'

So this is the wild geese arriving! Then beat, heart, and

strain, eyes, through the darkness, for this is an exciting moment. Not that there is the remotest chance of a shot at them at present; but it is enough if they alight close at hand and tarry, breakfasting, until daylight doth appear. How close the sound seems in the still air, and yet the birds may be a mile away! I can hear the slow, measured beat of their great wings as they approach, a solid phalanx, conversing quietly at short intervals. Surely they are very close indeed? They are all talking at once now. Perhaps they have seen the water and are excited, knowing that their journey is at an end. The beating of their wings seems almost to brush now the topmost boughs of the *shalashka*. I fancy I can feel a movement in the air, fanned by their big pinions. Thud! There goes the leader; he has alighted. Thud again—and yet again! It is true—they are here; they have come!

To judge from the noises which they are making, there must be a considerable number arrived—thirty or forty. They are chattering to one another happily and sociably, and uttering very different tones to those weird, melancholy cries of theirs while on the wing. They are no longer the lost spirits, the poor wandering unbaptized souls, but a party of merry travellers just arrived, so to speak, at the tavern where a comfortable breakfast is spread all ready for them. They are sure to do justice to it, for this is their favourite feeding ground—all over this marsh, so Ivan says. It is growing lighter. The conglomeration of sounds of life seems to have startled the Night, and reminded her that she must hurry away and attend to her duties in another hemisphere. She is gradually withdrawing her soft wings—those dark and motherly wings which have guarded so well her little ones for many a long silent hour. Go in peace, Mother Night, for the broad Sun will take good care of your bantlings during your absence. He will open upon them his ‘good gigantic smile,’ and they shall laugh and sing and be merry. Already I can catch a pale, sickly gleam of light, where the Waters look up to the grey sky and cry, ‘How long, Sun, how long the gloom and the cold?’

Be silent, lake, for soon the bridegroom will arrive, and you shall bedeck your waters with gems, and sparkle and glitter in leagues of dancing delight.

The sandpipers are merry and active, and flit from place to place in pairs and companies, whistling and rejoicing; they pass, now and again, so close to me that I can see them, and their whistling seems to come from the very air within the *shalashka*.

And the snipe overhead, he never tires of his lightning-flight and his wheeling; and his 'baa' is one of the sounds which continues without ceasing. There is yet another voice—a croak and then a whistle, and the same repeated farther away, and yet again in the distance: a woodcock, I believe, but I cannot see him. He is taking his spring-flight, followed or preceded by his spouse. They will flit across a given space, then alight and dally awhile in pretty courtship, then return the way they came; and so again, *da capo*.

What are those tall posts yonder, outlining themselves against the paling sky? They are motionless, apparently—no, they move, as I stare through the uncertain light; they shorten, and lengthen, and bend, and dip, and glide slowly forward and bend again: it is the cranes, I am sure of it, for the clamour seems to come from that very spot. But where are the geese? I can hear them but they are still invisible, for they are feeding head down, and show no outline against the sky. Listen! another band of melancholy air-wanderers is approaching—how weird, how pathetic is the sound of their coming! Do they then so hate the trouble of travelling? or is it merely that they have discovered which tone and note of the gamut carries furthest through the ether, and that this happens to be the most doleful of all notes? They are very close now—stay! What is this? are they not going to alight and join the happy breakfast-party below there? Apparently not: they are overhead, they have passed, they have gone on—I can see them; they are travelling in wedge-like formation, a big triangle of beating wings that flog the air with measured sound and slow. How deliberate and yet how swift and powerful is their flight! Why did they not stop here? Their cry was answered from below, and yet they did not pause but continued on their course. Why was the invitation to breakfast not accepted? Who can say what is the etiquette of the wild goose? Perhaps it was not an invitation, but rather an intimation that this place—this tavern—was already occupied by a rival community.

One or two of my former friends take wing and join the other party; no doubt they have some reason for this step, but what that reason is no man may conjecture. Perhaps they are scouts sent forward to find out who these new arrivals are; perhaps they have been badly treated here and have gone over to the enemy in order to 'better themselves.' Luckily the bulk of the party remain behind, however; and now, in the strengthening light, I can plainly see a body of stout grey fellows waddling about among the yellow

grasses and the moss, and feeding in the well-known manner of geese in any field in far-off England. Forty yards, I reckon, separates my *shalashka* from the nearest goose: one may yet wander nearer—it is worth while to be patient and to allow the light to intensify before hazarding a shot which will disperse every living creature within hearing, and end the delight with which this spring morning is stored.

Slowly the sky, due east, yellows and then reddens; it seems to be shooting up pink cloudlets, and letting them fly over heaven in order to herald the uprising of the King of Morning; for the Sun is coming—there can be no doubt of it! Redder and redder are the clouds that precede him; now the mists that veil his bed are golden and radiant, and fly right and left as he pushes his head through them and looks out upon the earth, and smiles in a broad pathway across the lake. As though by magic a thousand song birds fill the air with hymns of praise; even the tall cranes cease their gabbling and gobbling, and look for a moment at the apparition ere they resume the business of the hour. They are splashing about in shallow water, and each step they make throws a shower of bright gems around them. The geese—hungry no doubt after a long journey, and being naturally rather of a practical than of a romantic turn of mind, take but little notice of the Sun-god; he's all right, they think, and is sure to turn up at daybreak every morning, surely one need not interrupt one's breakfast to look up at him? The pace is too good! Look at the ducks—here a pair and there a pair—swimming out into the shining water, dipping their heads as they go and sending diamond-baths over the sheen of their necks and shoulders. They pursue one another, and quack and court, and bathe, and are perfectly and entirely happy and content, as who would not be in their place? A curlew sails by, calling to its mate, who is circling over the lake further to the left. And all the while the busy little company of sandpipers flit and whistle, and alight and run, and are off again on the wing—life is all movement and 'go' for them; they cannot be still.

There is an osprey! He is floating motionless in air, high over the lake. He, too, is thinking of breakfast. Soon he will drop like a bolt from heaven, disappear entirely or partially in the wave, and in a moment reappear with his meal safely held in those business-like talons of his. There he goes—splash! he has missed his mark. A cry of rage, and a circle or two over the water, and he is aloft again—hanging like an impending doom

over the bright lake. He will not miss again! Must I end all this happy, busy scene of joy; must I blot out this picture of peace and life by sending a message of grim death and noisy ruin into the very midst of it, adown my gun-barrel? Let me wait awhile, Ivan, and watch. It is so little for you who live amid all this and can see it at any time; but it is so much to me—a dweller in towns, where there is no free, happy nature-life to watch and feast upon, and no daybreak save that of the London cat and the strident, brazen cock. Give me another hour of it, Ivan? No? Well, half an hour? But Ivan says 'No;' the geese may depart at any moment, he whispers; shoot while you can! I have no doubt Ivan made a mental addition, 'and don't be a sentimental English idiot;' but the former words were all I was permitted to hear. So there is nothing for it: I must shoot; I must, with my own hand, blot out all this beauty, and smudge the picture which Morning has painted for my delight—and all to see a grey goose flutter and die on the earth where now he is so busy and happy! The game is not worth the candle; but it must be done! One shot as they stand, says pitiless Ivan, and another as they rise—unless I prefer to hazard a cartridge after one of yonder cranes. Crane me no cranes: it is goose or nothing; give me the gun, Ivan!

There! the deed is done, for good or for evil. The goose who stood to receive my shot lived on, and I trust still lives; his feathers are thick and tough, and I hope in mercy that if he is hit at all his plumage has turned aside or suffocated the shot, and that he is not much hurt. He is gone, anyhow, flying strongly. The goose which rose to receive fire will rise no more. He is dead; he will utter no more his sad pilgrim-notes; he will feed no more in those pleasant pastures. Go and pick him up, Ivan, and he shall be cooked and tentatively eaten, and perhaps pronounced very nice, and perhaps condemned as very nasty.

Now turn and see what we have done. The last crane has taken wing—running a few yards and jumping clumsily into the air, rather like a cyclist mounting his machine. He will fly a hundred yards before those long legs of his are comfortably stowed away! What a slow flight his seems, yet it carries him wonderfully far away from us in a short time!

And the ducks? Gone also; circling high in air, taking stock of us. When they have made up their minds that we are bad characters and not to be trusted, they will head for a distant point and disappear. The curlew is far away, so is the osprey; the sand-

pipers are still in the neighbourhood, they are too inquisitive to go far from us ; they must needs watch us and find out all about us first. And away there in the bright distance floats, receding, the triangle of geese—one less than it came, and one, perhaps, in pain and suffering, though Heaven forbid that this should be so.

All this we have done, friend Ivan, with our banging and bloodshed ! See what a transformation scene the act of man works, in an instant, upon a lovely landscape ? Of life he makes death ; of busy, happy places, full of colours and of sounds, and of song and of joy, he makes a barren waste, with himself the sole living creature remaining to look upon the face of it ! Let us go home, Ivan, we shall see no more of bird-life this morning ; take up your poor grey victim and come along—the place will be the better and the happier for our departure, and perhaps, after a while, all its evicted tenants, save one, may return again to their own.

But Ivan only remarks that I ought to have shot that first goose in the head, and then we should have had two instead of one. Then he scratches his own head, gazes long and intently over the sparkling waters of the lake in the direction where the departed geese are now but a dark smudge in the distant sky, spits on the ground in contempt of muff-shots and lost opportunities, and strides away towards the ponies. As we disappear in the forest I look back and see some ducks returning, and hear the sandpipers whistle us a taunting farewell ! Amen ! No one wants us here : they are all happier without us.

FRED. WHISHAW.

At the Sign of the Ship.

OCCASIONAL students may have noticed in these pages verses signed R. F. Murray. The last was a poem on a boy's vision, as he reads the *Three Musketeers*, given to him by 'Uncle Jim.' The death of Mr. Murray, early in January, should not be left unrecorded here. His life was brief; in many ways, almost in all ways, it was thwarted, full of disappointments, and finally clouded and weakened by consumption. But it was bravely lived, in a spirit of gallant content and noble enjoyment of the great primary things, Nature, poetry, affection. When one reads the whinings in prose, and the lamentations in verse, of people to whom life offers comfort and variety, one appreciates all the more that courage of Murray's, his constant recognition of kindness and friendliness and honour in the world; his appreciation of goodness in an age of realism that finds all things evil. His place in the great theatre was humble and cheerless, but he heartily applauded the performance, as heartily as if he had been seated high with honours and rewards. Nothing, we may say, went well with him; his talent was never recognised, was never a source of profit, his labour was of the lowliest, while his taste and genius were of the most refined. He had an ideal, to do his best; an ambition, to excel; money, beyond his very modest needs, and notoriety, were indifferent to him.

* * *

R. F. Murray was born in New England, in 1863, the son of a Scotch Unitarian Minister, and of an American lady, who survives her son and husband. When a boy of seven or eight he came to Scotland, lived at or near Kelso for a year; then with his parents at York and at Canterbury, where he was fond of attending the cathedral services in the Church of the Martyr. These tastes did not, perhaps, blend very well with Unitarian doctrines and forms of worship. His family now settled at Ilminster, in

green Somerset. Murray was educated at Crewkerne Grammar School, and in 1881 he entered St. Andrews University, with a scholarship as an external student of Manchester New College. This he soon resigned on giving up the idea of becoming an Unitarian minister.

* * *

He lost his heart to St. Andrews, to the severe charm of the Northern sea, of the ruins, the memories of the place, the frugal enjoyments of student life. He was not, it must be admitted, an earnest student; he read what he liked, he read for pleasure, and mathematics barred his approach to a degree. In English literature, however, he was the most distinguished pupil of the regretted and genial Professor Baynes. He was a great contributor to the College journals, and a pleasant collection of his lighter verses was published in 1891 by Mr. Holden (London: Simpkin & Marshall). The parodies in *The Scarlet Gown* are not, I think, inferior to those of Mr. Calverley and J. K. S., but St. Andrews is a little place, and has not an audience like that fostered by Oxford and Cambridge. *The Scarlet Gown* is NOT 'out of print,' do not let your bookseller persuade you that it is. There is also a volume printed with musical accompaniments by Dr. Farmer. Nothing can be better in Horace's way than the 'Adventure of a Poet,' with a Bore:—

His name was Alexander Bell,
His home, Dundee;
I do not know him quite so well
As he knows me.

His maiden aunts, no longer young,
But learned ladies,
Had lately sent him *Songs Unsung*,
Epic of Hades,

Gycia, and *Gwen*. He thought them fine,
Not like that Browning,
Of whom he could not read a line,
He told me, frowning.

There are all sorts of tastes in a world. A *Ballad of Refreshment*, with its refrain,

And the bun was baked a week ago,

is a good ballad. This strikes one as a very clever, though local, parody.

MILTON.

WITH APOLOGIES TO LORD TENNYSON.

O swallow-tailed purveyor of college sprees,
 O skilled to please the student fraternity,
 Most honoured publican of Scotland,
 Milton, a name to adorn the Cross Keys;
 Whose chosen waiters, Samuel, Archibald,
 Helped by the boots and marker at billiards,
 Wait, as the smoke-filled, crowded chamber
 Rings to the roar of a Gaelic chorus—
 Me rather all those temperance hostelries,
 The soda siphon fizzily murmuring,
 And lime-fruit juice and seltzer water
 Charm, as a wanderer out in South Street,
 Where some recruiting, eager Blue-Ribbonites
 Spied me afar and caught by the Post Office,
 And crimson-nosed the latest convert
 Fastened the odious badge upon me.

Mr. Milton was—perhaps is—a local vintner, and the poet really shunned the juice of the grape and the barley bree. This piece, on examinations, may be of universal interest in an age of education.

THE END OF APRIL.

This is the time when larks are singing loud
 And higher still ascending and more high,
 This is the time when many a fleecy cloud
 Runs lamb-like on the pastures of the sky,
 This is the time when most I love to lie
 Stretched on the links, now listening to the sea,
 Now looking at the train that dawdles by;
 But James is going in for his degree.

James is my brother. He has twice been ploughed,
 Yet he intends to have another shy,
 Hoping to pass (as he says) in a crowd.
 Sanguine is James, but not so sanguine I.

If you demand my reason, I reply :
 Because he reads no Greek without a key
 And spells Thucydides c-i-d-y ;
 Yet James is going in for his degree.

No doubt, if the authorities allowed
 The taking in of Bohns, he might defy
 The stiffest paper that has ever cowed
 A timid candidate and made him fly.
 Without such aids, he all as well may try
 To cultivate the people of Dundee,
 Or lead the camel through the needle's eye ;
 Yet James is going in for his degree.

Vain are the efforts hapless mortals ply
 To climb of knowledge the forbidden tree ;
 Yet still about its roots they strive and cry,
 And James is going in for his degree.

The people of Dundee are regarded at St. Andrews, no doubt erroneously, as singularly recalcitrant to culture. I must find room for a parody of Poe's *Haunted Palace*, explaining that a 'Bejant' is a freshman, and the Swilcan the little burn—trap inevitable for my golf-ball—which flows through the Links.

THE BANISHED BEJANT.

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED REMAINS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE.

In the oldest of our alleys,
 By good bejants tenanted,
 Once a man whose name was Wallace—
 William Wallace—reared his head.
 Rowdy Bejant in the college
 He was styled :
 Never had these halls of knowledge
 Welcomed waster¹ half so wild !

Tassel blue and long and silken
 From his cap did float and flow
 (This was cast into the Swilcan
 Two months ago) ;

¹ Waster = Fast Man.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

And every gentle air that sported
With his red gown,
Displayed a suit of clothes, reported
The most alarming in the town.

Wanderers in that ancient alley
Through his luminous window saw
Spirits come continually
From a case well packed with straw,
Just behind the chair where, sitting
With air serene,
And in a blazer loosely fitting,
The owner of the bunk was seen.

And all with cards and counters straying
Was the place littered o'er,
With which sat playing, playing, playing,
And wrangling evermore,
A group of fellows, whose chief function
Was to proclaim,
In voices of surpassing unction,
Their luck and losses in the game.

But stately things, in robes of learning,
Discussed one day the bejant's fate:
Ah, let us mourn him unreturning,
For they resolved to rusticate!
And now the glory he inherits,
Thus dished and doomed,
Is largely founded on the merits
Of the Old Tom consumed.

And wanderers, now, within that alley
Through the half-open shutters see,
Old crones, that talk continually
In a discordant minor key:
While, with a kind of nervous shiver,
Past the front door,
His former set go by for ever,
But knock—or ring—no more.

* * *

With his literary adroitness, Murray should have made a competence as a penman. But he never did. He hated towns and he hated crowds, as much as he loved the sea and the green dens of the Fifeshire burns. He could not tear himself away from St. Andrews, where he supported himself by aiding Professor Meiklejohn, his constant friend, in compiling school-books. At last he went to Edinburgh. He worked for the *Scottish Leader*, and had to stand at a given point, see poor Mr. Parnell enter Edinburgh in triumph, and write thirty lines of picturesque description. I do not think that he was strongly interested in Mr. Parnell. He left the paper: he tried proof-reading for Messrs. Constable, but his health, never strong, suffered from confinement. He fled back to his dear city, that haggard enchantress of the incommunicable charm. Then his many bad colds culminated in consumption; a visit to Egypt rather aggravated the complaint. He returned to Ilminster, dying; he wrote a little verse in *Punch* and the *St. James's Gazette*; he recast his serious poems, he saw St. Andrews once more, and then he died at home.

* * *

He was not successful. He was very reserved and shy, though a charming companion. His powers were developing slowly, he was not early ripe. He was sensitive, and his ambition never was an ambition to 'get on.' In all this his health and constitution were drawbacks. If he did not succeed, he was not unhappy. He never was bitter, he never grudged, nor envied, nor sneered. 'He had kept the bird in his bosom.'

* * *

I am permitted, by the kindness of Mrs. Murray, to publish one of his serious pieces, which is very characteristic of his nature and genius. It is intended to appear later, in a volume of his serious poems, with a Memoir by the present writer. In the great flood of poetry we can hardly expect for Murray's any very prominent place. But it was invariably sincere, wholly unaffected, in brief, his own. With Robert Ferguson—the master of Burns, though now so much and unduly neglected—with Ferguson and with the great Montrose, Murray is one of the three poets of his beloved little University. It is vain to hope that

Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.

*AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.**MOONLIGHT NORTH AND SOUTH.*

Love, we have heard together
The North Sea sing his tune,
And felt the wind's wild feather
Brush past our cheeks at noon,
And seen the cloudy weather
Made wondrous with the moon.

Where loveliness is rarest,
'Tis also prized the most :
The moonlight shone her fairest
Along that level coast,
Where sands and dunes the barest,
Of beauty seldom boast.

Far from that bleak and rude land,
An exile I remain,
Fixed in a fair and good land,
A valley and a plain,
Rich in fat fields and woodland,
And watered well with rain.

Last night the full moon's splendour
Shone down on Taunton Dene,
And pasture fresh and tender,
And coppice dusky green,
The heavenly light did render
In one enchanted scene,

One fair unearthly vision.
Yet soon mine eyes were cloyed,
And found those fields Elysian
Too rich to be enjoyed.
Or was it our division
Made all my pleasure void ?

Across the window glasses
The curtain then I drew,
And as a sea-bird passes,
In sleep my spirit flew
To grey and wind-swept grasses,
And moonlit sands, and you.

* * *

In thinking of Murray one may say, without disparagement that the man was more remarkable than the poet, and that his character was fully formed, while his genius was only ripening. The literary arts which Mr. Arnold says that Mr. Clough did not possess were arts which Murray could never have acquired.

* * *

'The *Athæneum*. Golly, what a paper!' says a rude person in *The Wrong Box*. He might well have said so in the primitive days described by Mr. Jeaffreson in his *Book of Recollections*. I have elsewhere unpacked my bosom of the wrath provoked by some of Mr. Jeaffreson's statements about Thackeray, and to that subject one need not return. But the doings of the *Athenæum* in ancient times are startling. With a fresh simplicity which may account for many of his revelations, Mr. Jeaffreson tells us how he wrote a novel; how his plot anticipated the Tichborne affair; how, when the Claimant broke out, he made a note of it in the *Athæneum*, and spoke of his own story as 'popular' and 'fascinating.' I have read the passage again, and again, and can hardly now believe that there is not some hallucination. But it appears to be in black and white, this remarkable confession. Times altered, another editor arose, who knew Joseph, and would not allow him to review the novel of a lady friend. In these ages lived a fiend in human shape. The novel of the lady friend was unsympathetically criticised, and the fiend told her that he knew for certain that Mr. Jeaffreson was the critic. Happily he was able to disprove this charge. But when Miss Jewsbury attacked another novel, by a new writer, people 'cut' Mr. Jeaffreson, under the delusion that he was the executioner. The anonymous system causes all sorts of errors and needless hatreds. You cannot stamp an article all over with your name, as it were, so vigorously that, if it is unsigned, people will not attribute it to somebody else. The present writer lately signed an article in the *Contemporary Review*, with the proud title, 'A Fogey.' He put in all his hobbies, all the King Charles's Heads which cannot be kept out of his Memorials. Golf and Mr. Peter Anderson, Wodrow, Theocritus, *tout le tremblement*, folklore and all were there, of set purpose, and I dare say it is attributed to 'some other body.' On the other hand, everything that a man did not write, and could not have written, is assigned to him. So it will be, till names are put to articles. Signatures, to critical literary articles, would prevent a number of mean and wrong

things from being done, and still more from being suspected. But a good deal of mystery would be destroyed, and people who excite themselves over reviews would lose most of their occupation.

* * *

Why does not Mr. Stanley Weyman write a novel about the period of Joan of Arc? The heroine herself, no doubt, could only cross the stage, like Shakspeare, by a violent anachronism, in *Kenilworth*. She is too great to be meddled with. How little the Master of Romance knew about Joan may be gathered from his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*. Joan is 'this poor woman,' 'this unfortunate female,' 'a tool used by the celebrated Dunois to play the part he had assigned to her.' Why, Dunois was a mere instrument in her hands: he followed her lead, and, against the grain, adopted her strategy. However, she was 'an innocent, high-minded, and, perhaps, amiable enthusiast.' The documents in the case had not been published when Scott wrote these very funny remarks. Joan is too great for fiction to handle safely. But the period is full of adventure, and we know a great deal of detail about it. If Mr. Weyman would keep his eye on Guy de Laval, the young knight who wrote the happy, boyish letter to his mother on Joan, and on a tennis match, if he would remember what a fine villain is ready, in Franquet d'Arras, the Burgundian robber knight, he would find matter enough. Then, at the heroic siege of Compiègne, after Joan was taken in the fatal sortie, he will find an admirable character ready made. This is the clerical gunner, who bagged 300 English and Burgundians in the siege. Chastellain describes him minutely, and he literally seems to have walked out of a lost novel of Scott's. That author knew not Chastellain, whose MS. had not yet, I think, been discovered by M. Quicherat. There this later Friar Tuck lives, waiting to be universally admired, for everyone does not read the fragment of Chastellain. If one could only write a novel! But there, and in Monstrelet and the Latin chroniclers, there is a novel waiting to be written. We may, indeed, say that here history is so good that fiction must not intrude, but then the history is not familiar to every reader of romance, and is not likely to be.

* * *

A curious piece of problematical history has been unearthed at St. Andrews. In the wall surrounding the priory is a tower,

called locally 'The Haunted Tower.' A writer in the *Saturday Review* told a legend of the place, to the effect, I think, that the tower was once opened, when a company of the dead were found seated at feast round a table. This was picturesque, but is said not to be historically correct. The tower was entered about twenty-five years ago, and it contained coffins and corpses partially or completely embalmed. The coffins were of fir and of oak—the oak older and more decayed than the fir. These coffins had ridge-shaped lids; there were 'cere-cloths.' Mr. Hutcheson suggests that, from these and other signs, we may conjecture that the coffins and corpses are older than the sixteenth century tower in which they lie to this day. He conjectures that the coffins may contain bodies of saints and of persons of high rank, which may have been concealed in the tower when, or shortly before, Knox's mob sacked the sacred buildings. The relics of St. Andrew the Apostle *may* be there, in the Haunted Tower, though Mr. Hutcheson does not make this romantic suggestion. The title 'Haunted Tower' seems to be a good deal older than the date of the opening of the turret: how old it is probably impossible to discover. We may be pretty certain of one thing—namely, that there are no objects of intrinsic value in the receptacle. Legend has preserved no information as to the nature of the 'hauntings.'

* * *

Melbourne has taken hold of Culture, and she is just making Culture hum. She has had a Free Library for eighteen months. The most curious statistics are quoted by the *Publishers' Circular*. No less than 130,000 works have been 'taken out.' But you cannot get the depraved Kipling, the luxurious Ouida, and the brutal and licentious Rider Haggard. They are not pure and good enough for Melbourne. 'Mrs. Wood and Miss Braddon do not satisfy the Trustees.' One would be glad (like Charles Lamb on a familiar occasion) to inspect the 'bumps' and cerebral development of those Trustees. Are they very wealthy men? If Miss Braddon does not 'satisfy' them, what literary appetites they must have. I know no author more satisfying than Miss Braddon: it is a pity she has written so little: but one can always read her over again.

* * *

They don't want Austin Dobson or Mr. William Watson, they sniff at Lord de Tabley and Mr. Norman Gale. But they have put

in a Reference Library as many as they can get of the mournful minor poets branded by Mr. Traill. The favourite Novelist, O ye Powers who smile at the deeds of men, is George Eliot. Then comes Mark Twain (bully for Mark!) and Dickens a long way after. Probably they never heard of Thackeray: Scott and Hawthorne are not so much as mentioned. Oh no, we never mention them, their name is quite forgot; we never heard of Hawthorne, Fielding, De Foe, or Scott, Hall Caine, or Sterne, or Richardson, we are a curious lot; Swift, Goldsmith, Smollett, Richardson are totally forgot. They do not read our own immortal R. L. S., or Mrs. Ward, or Mrs. Oliphant; Mr. Meredith's name was struck out of the catalogue, though later replaced, but they dote on Mr. Hardy. One shall be taken, and another left. If Mr. Hardy, why not Mr. Meredith, and why, in the name of kangaroos, damper, boomerangs, and bunyips, no Mr. Stevenson? I can understand their not reading Mr. —, but why don't they read Mr. Austin Dobson? Obscurity in company with Scott and Hawthorne and Fielding is good enough for anybody, however ambitious. In fact, on this showing, not to be read in Melbourne is a feather in a writer's cap. 'With the reading habit,' says the *Publishers' Circular*, will 'come a fuller appreciation of authors, old and new.' Let us hope so, there is plenty of room for an extension of taste. Probably the Trustees are at the bottom of the mystery: perhaps they are self-made men. Or can they be Professors? Or are they all minor poets? Meanwhile, what is Sydney doing? Probably reading all the books that Melbourne rejects as unworthy of her quality.

* * *

The Editor of a magazine very kindly sent me, lately, the proofs of a magazine article still unpublished. Why this previousness? We are not in such a cruel hurry to see articles which will appear quite early enough. This particular screed was on Tennyson, and seemed to be written by a person whose good conceit of himself was in inverse ratio to his sense of poetry. It is easy to make a kind of stir by attacking Tennyson, but the effect produced on one reader reacted on the proofs. They were torn up and consigned to the waste-paper basket. This was not a reply, it was a revenge. But we do not argue about colour with the colour-blind.

ANDREW LANG.

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